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

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Edmonton metro



RIZ AHMED
I find my lack of Star Wars fandom... disturbing
metroLIFE

Your essential daily news | WEEKEND, DECEMBER 16-18, 2016

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TRIBUTE SHOW



Bands to honour 'completely selfless' champion of Edmonton's music scene **metroNEWS**

KEVIN TUONG/FOR METRO

Street names may take off

BLATCHFORD

Neighbourhood's aviation history comes full circle



Jeremy Simes
Metro | Edmonton

Edmonton's little-known aviation pioneers may not be forgotten when streets begin to line the former City Centre Airport.

Though it's not the final proposal, the city's Cory Sousa said planners are in ongoing discussions to potentially name streets in the Blatchford development after Edmonton's first aviation experts and even the runway numbers.

"We're looking at a unique naming situation," said Sousa, who manages the naming of streets. "But will still have a lot more consulting to do."

Blatchford, a green neighbourhood development of Edmonton's old airport, used to be home to Canada's first licensed airfield, Blatchford Field, becoming a major stopover during the Second World War.

"In 1943, there were more than 800 landings and takeoffs per day," said Lech Lebedowski, the head curator at the Alberta Aviation Museum. "It was one of the busiest airports in the world."

In fact, Lebedowski said he's sent the city a list of names that could be on street signs. They include Cedric Mah, Jimmy Bell, Katherine Stinson, Marie Wright and more.

Lebedowski said he would like to see more female names on Edmonton street signs.

"They've almost been completely ignored," he said. "And yet they've made enormous contributions (to aviation)."

He said it's important to preserve Edmonton's history, even in the form of a street sign. "That shows where we come from," he said. "The local history is absolutely enormous. It's fascinating. Say you go to Blatchford and see a name, it will encourage you to do a bit of research."

Sousa said the final proposal will go to the city's naming committee — which has the final say — by the end of January. Planners will also have to ensure the street names can work when they're searched online for directions.

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WILDROSE PARTY

Fildebrandt renews call for small-c merger

Alberta Wildrose member Derek Fildebrandt is renewing his call for conservative forces to unite.

Derek Fildebrandt says the people he has talked to in Alberta and his Strathmore-Brooks constituency say the NDP must go because their policies are destructive to the province's future.

"The NDP are too dangerous. They're too ideological and too destructive to the future of this province to take chances," Fildebrandt said after a speech Wednesday night in Whitecourt.

"I'm willing to put everything I've accomplished in politics on the line for this."

Fildebrandt has long been an advocate for a merger of the Progressive Conservatives and his Wildrose party.

One of the candidates in the current PC leadership race, Jason Kenney, says if he wins the vote in March he will seek a mandate from members to merge the party with the Wildrose.

Kenney says vote splitting among small-c conservatives in the 2015 election led to an NDP win and only a merger can prevent that from happening again in 2019.

Wildrose Leader Brian Jean says he believes like-minded conservatives should unite, but says he is taking a wait-and-see approach to any overtures from the PCs.

CIXM/THE CANADIAN PRESS



The next generation of smoking? Tobacco sales slow, as vaping becomes a trend on the rise. KEVIN TUONG/FOR METRO

The future of smoking

CIGARETTES

Imperial Tobacco director speaks about direction of industry



Kevin Maimann
Metro | Edmonton

A director at Canada's largest tobacco manufacturer took some time to chat with Metro about the cigarette industry this week.

Alberta has some of the high-

est smoking rates in Canada and has been working to limit those numbers in recent years. Eric Gagnon, director of corporate and regulatory affairs at Imperial Tobacco, discussed falling sales, Alberta's menthol ban and the rise of vaping.

What are the trends in cigarette sales that you've seen in Alberta specifically?

It's a very traditional market. We've seen obviously menthol disappear. It's a declining industry.

We decline by one or two per cent every year, that's just the way the industry goes.

What's your defence of flavoured tobacco — why does it need to be out there?

We supported (banning) anything that is fruity and confectionery. We don't believe that you should have, for example, bubblegum and these types of products in a tobacco product. It is a harmful product and it should be consumed by adults who smoke knowing the risk associated with smoking.

On the other hand, when you look at flavours like menthol — menthol has been around for ages. The majority of people smoking

menthol are adults over 35 years old and we don't believe they should be banned.

Imperial Tobacco has talked about entering the e-cigarette industry. What's the progress on that?

We obviously welcome the (legislation) that was introduced recently which wants to regulate vaping in Canada.

We believe we have the responsibility to put on the market less harmful products for consumers that do want to quit (smoking) or that do want to switch, and then we will invest significant amount of money into

those products."

Do you think e-cigarettes could take over as your primary product in the future?

I don't know if it's going to take over, to be honest. I think our responsibility is to make it available to consumers, and then consumers are going to dictate where the market is going to go.

Is the marijuana business something you are considering getting into when legalization passes?

At this point in time it's not part of the strategic agenda. So, no.

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MAPPED

The downtown core in various stages of development



GRAPHIC BY ANDRES PLANA



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URBAN PLANNING

Council OKs 600 parking spaces, but debate not over



Jeremy Simes
Metro | Edmonton

Coun. Andrew Knack says he didn't vote for the new surface parking beside Rogers Place for two reasons — Edmonton doesn't need more downtown parking and it won't make the core more vibrant.

And Knack said he would be more confident in the Katz Group's proposed 'urban village' if the company presented an

application to develop the land, along with parking. The group has promised to build the village after three years.

"But I do have the utmost faith we're going to see this urban village because we've seen so much development," he said.

Nevertheless, city council voted seven to five Monday to approve the new, 600-stall parking lot, on the condition the Katz Group builds something better after three years.

But Mary Ann Debrinski, director of urban renewal with city administration, said the city has steered development in the core toward vacant lots, which are primarily used for parking.

In fact, the core — which encompasses the city's downtown community revitalization levy boundary — saw the number

of vacant lots reduce by 12 per cent in three years.

But Debrinski said it's about striking a balance when council approves surface lots, like the one next to Rogers Place.

Still, some councillors have questioned if downtown needs the lot. Administration has suggested in past reports that the core does not need another to accommodate Rogers Place parking for Oilers games and events.

But Simon O'Byrne, who was speaking on behalf of the Katz Group Monday, said some people need the parking lot because they aren't comfortable walking longer distances to the arena.

"A lot of the underground parking that exists in downtown Edmonton right now doesn't always accommodate large trucks and SUVs," he added.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Feds to approve Yellowhead project

The federal government is announcing funding Friday for the \$1-billion overhaul of Yellowhead Trail.

A source confirmed they're stepping up to fund their third of the project.

Mayor Don Iveson, provincial Infrastructure Minister Brian Mason and federal Infra-

structure and Communities Minister Amarjeet Sohi are scheduled to make the announcement near the major roadway Friday morning.

Funding will be split three ways between the city, province and feds. The province announced a commitment to its share of \$242 million in

November.

The money will pave the way for construction on turning a 25-kilometre stretch of the road into a freeway.

The federal government was waiting for the province to pony up before it approve d the project.

JEREMY SIMES/METRO EDMONTON



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MARIJUANA

Airport facility will help you get high

A medical marijuana company says it is expanding production with a massive new grow facility at the Edmonton International Airport.

Aurora Cannabis said the airport is close to customs for importing the supplies and equipment it needs and the location will make it easier to export pot to its customers in Canada and eventually to other countries where marijuana is legal.

The company said the

74,000-square-metre facility, called Aurora Sky, will be larger than 16 football fields and will be capable of producing more than 100,000 kilograms of cannabis per year.

Aurora vice-president Cam Battley said the new operation will help meet growing demand for medical marijuana and position it to supply recreational pot once it is legalized by the federal government.

"The demand is now about

130,000 patients in the medical cannabis system," Battley said Thursday.

"We need to expand to meet that demand and we also have our eye very much on the federal government's intention to table legislation in the spring to legalize the consumer use."

On Wednesday, a federal task force on legalized recreational marijuana recommended sales be allowed to Canadians 18 years and older.

Battley said it also chose the airport location on federal land for its warehouse space, security and its proximity to shipping and courier companies.

Heather Hamilton, spokeswoman for Edmonton International Airport, said the lease agreement with Aurora will earn money for the airport, help attract more businesses and bolster the region's economy.

"It is a done deal," she said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



A Cooper's hawk was spotted during two years ago at a Christmas bird count in Ontario. The annual count happens across the country and helps track bird trends. METRO FILE

Bird count set to begin

ANIMALS

Annual public tally helps researchers track trends

Sarah Hoyles
For Metro

Gerald Romanchuk will have his eyes to the sky this Sunday when he heads out for the Edmonton Christmas Bird Count.

This will be the 15th year he's joined hundreds of Edmontonians in the annual tally of wild birds in the city.

"It's a chance to participate in a pretty big citizen science project. Volunteers go out and do bird counting so the biologists can look at general trends," he said.



It's a ... pretty big citizen science project.

Gerald Romanchuk

Eager birders have been doing the early-winter bird census in Edmonton every year since 1955. Local volunteers are assigned circles of land 15 miles in diameter, and count all the birds they see.

The information is added to a database managed and analyzed by the National Audubon Society and Bird Studies Canada.

Eileen Secord, spokesperson for Bird Studies, said the count helps track trends in bird populations.

"It gives a really good snapshot of what birds are still around in the winter, when a lot of the migrating ones have gone further south," she said.

Last year, the Edmonton count saw more than 500 people tally over 27,000 birds from 55 different species.

The downy woodpecker, North America's smallest woodpecker, showed up in record numbers — 568 were spotted.

The house finch, known for the male bird's bright red head and twittering song, was also commonly sighted in the city. Volunteers noted 1,159 of the small birds.

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Drunk driving down, still a problem

REPORT

Alberta ranks second highest amongst all provinces



Kevin Maimann
Metro | Edmonton

Drunk driving remains prevalent in Alberta, according to a new Statistics Canada report.

The province ranks second among the 10 provinces in drunk driving numbers, behind only Saskatchewan, with 314 instances per 100,000 people recorded in 2015.

But it's not all bad news. Alberta's drunk driving rates are down nine per cent from 2014, compared to an overall four per cent decline across Canada.

In the 30 years since Statistics Canada started collecting comparable data, impaired driving has dropped 74 per cent in Alberta versus 65 per cent nationwide.



Drunk driving numbers continue to decline across Canada. THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

"Alberta is high, but it's getting better," said analyst Samuel Perreault.

The three territories also have higher drunk driving rates than Alberta.

Edmonton specifically placed seventh highest of 34



Alberta is high, but it's getting better.

Samuel Perreault

cities, while Calgary placed 20th, falling below the national average.

But Perreault said those numbers don't tell the whole story.

In fact, digging deeper seems to flip stats between

the two cities.

Calgary recorded nine impaired driving deaths in 2015, compared to three in Edmonton.

And in self-reported data from 2014, almost twice as many Calgarians admitted drinking and driving in the last 12 months.

The contrast could be explained by Edmonton police putting more focus or acting more effectively to catch impaired drivers, Perreault said. "Police enforcement and practice could be something that could explain at least part of the difference," he said.

Numbers have dropped the most among Canada's "at-risk" populations, specifically drivers under 25 years old and men — though men still make up 80 per cent of drunk drivers.

The report measured recidivism for the first time, using 2014 data, and determined that drivers who reported drinking and driving more than once were responsible for 97 per cent of self-reported drinking and driving incidents.

72,039

Number of impaired driving incidents police reported across Canada in 2015.

575

Number of impaired driving incidents per 100,000 population in Saskatchewan. That's nearly twice as high as Alberta (314).

7.3

Percentage of Canadian motorists who play a team sport and self-reported drinking and driving in the past year. That's almost twice as high as those who don't play team sports (3.9 per cent).

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WHAT'S GOING ON

Events will bring laughter and drinks

ALL WEEKEND

WHAT: Singing Christmas Tree
Edmonton's annual holiday tradition returns, with a 35-foot-tall Christmas tree as the centre-piece for a family-friendly night.
WHERE: Northern Alberta Jubilee Auditorium, 11455 87 Ave.
WHEN: Daily through Sunday, from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m.

FRIDAY

WHAT: Deck the LOLs
Local musical comedy duo Success 5000 is throwing a

Christmas party to celebrate the release of its new live album, titled *We'll Fix it in Post*. Everyone in attendance will get a free copy. Space Nunz, Mikey Maybe and comedian Lisa Baker will warm the stage, and Tim Mikula will host.
WHERE: Bohemia, 10217 97 St.
WHEN: Friday at 8:30 p.m.

WHAT: Yule Ave

A full weekend of free fun activities, including carolling and horse and wagon rides.

WHERE: Alberta Avenue Community League, 118 Ave. and 92 St.
WHEN: Friday through Sunday

SATURDAY

WHAT: Drink and Draw

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WHERE: Church of John, 10260 103 St.

WHEN: Saturday from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

WHAT: The Violette Underground — A Pop-up Speakeasy Burlesque

Expect a variety of performances starting every 15 minutes, including spoken word poetry, singing, theatrics, jazz, cabaret — and burlesque.
WHERE: The Local Omnivore, 10933 120 St.
WHEN: Saturday, from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. KEVIN MAIMANN/METRO



Owen Lukawesky, Cole McKelvie and Spencer Heykants organized a show in honour of their friend. KEVIN TUONG/FOR METRO

Tribute for late record label owner

MUSIC

Steven Staffler died of carbon monoxide poisoning



Kevin Maimann
Metro | Edmonton

Steve Staffler had friends over on the night of Saturday, Nov. 19 to discuss upcoming releases and festival applications for bands on his Edmonton record label, Sometimes Music.

Drinks were poured, fun was had and progress was made.

The next morning, Staffler was found dead, from carbon monoxide poisoning.

Nine Edmonton bands will converge on the Buckingham Sunday to celebrate Staffler's life.

Staffler co-owned Sometimes Music and previously co-owned

the downtown venue Bohemia.

"He was completely selfless. I think everybody sort of recognized that," said Owen Lukawesky, who plays in Red Hot Gospel (RHG), one of the bands performing Sunday.

Lukawesky was with Staffler at the house on his last night, and left without suspecting anything was amiss. The two had met years earlier at Bohemia, a space that earned a reputation for its no-boundaries booking approach, by taking chances on unknown and experimental artists.

They became friends and RHG signed to Sometimes Music.

"The stuff that Steve did for us was crazy. He got us across the country and into a lot of people's ears that would have never heard us," Lukawesky said.

Cole McKelvie, who continues to run Sometimes Music with two friends, said Staffler's death was related to a boiler in the house.

All proceeds raised Sunday will go to Staffler's family.

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MUSEUM ALBERTAN WOMEN A PART OF AVIATION HISTORY Lech Lebedowski, head curator at the Alberta Aviation Museum, says many great women have made contributions to Edmonton's aviation history. For example, Kathrine Stinson was the first woman to fly in Alberta. She was also the first to deliver mail by plane in Western Canada. KEVIN TUONG/FOR METRO

Suicide decline was 'unexpected'

REPORT

Reason for decrease hard to pinpoint, says professor

Elizabeth Cameron
For Metro | Calgary

High suicide rates in Alberta appear to be decreasing, which one expert calls "surprising."

"It's counterintuitive, you'd expect rates to go up when you have increases in economic distress," said Peter Silverstone, a professor of psychiatry at the University of Alberta.

In the first six months of 2016, 255 people have taken their own lives, according to information from the office of Alberta's chief medical examiner (OCME).

That's a 25 per cent decrease from 2015 — over the same period last year, 333 people committed suicide in the province.

Silverstone calls those statistics unexpected, but positive.

Because suicide is such a complex issue, the professor said it's difficult to pinpoint why the rates appear to be declining.

"If we're going to continue this in the long term, we need a comprehensive approach," Silverstone said.

The professor said psychiatric issues, especially suicide, have become a taboo in our society. Silverstone emphasized the importance of bringing the discussion out into the open to combat Alberta's higher-than-average suicide rates compared to the rest of Canada.

Mara Grunau, executive director at the Centre for Suicide Prevention in Calgary, agreed.

"Anytime there are fewer deaths by suicide, we are thrilled. However, we still have over 500 people dying by suicide in this province every year — and that's just unacceptable," said Grunau.

One troubling statistic Grunau highlighted is that for

“

If we're going to continue this long-term, we need a comprehensive approach.

Peter Silverstone

every female suicide in Canada, there are three male suicides.

"In Alberta, we have a lot of hyper-masculine, lone-wolf type industries like farming, ranching, and the oil patch," she said.

She said there is a positive cultural shift among young adults, but middle-aged men remain the highest-risk group for suicide.

"For middle aged men, it's not as common to talk about their feelings or show vulnerabilities," Grunau said.

She urged anyone considering suicide or concerned about someone they know to call the Distress Centre at 403-266-4357.

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Family believed dead in house fire



Fire officials at the scene of a fire on Oneida Nation on Thursday.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

A father, three young children and a baby are believed to have died in a fire that destroyed their home and ripped apart their First Nation community amid efforts Thursday to recover and identify the charred remains of the victims.

Shocked community leaders and residents struggled to come to terms with the devastating loss that occurred about 12 hours after a blaze in Port Colborne, Ont., also claimed

the lives of four family members.

"We've only started to understand what has happened," Randall Phillips, chief of the Oneida Nation of the Thames, said Thursday. "Our community is suffering. There's not a person in this community that doesn't know one of the victims or the victims' family."

Relatives of the dead were in shock, and heart-broken, Phillips said, adding that a

forensic anthropologist had only managed to identify the remains of the adult and one of the children.

A man who said he was a brother of the deceased father shooed photographers from the blackened frame of the house on the edge of the town as firefighters and investigators worked in the wreckage of the home.

Firefighters arriving on the scene in frigid temperatures at

about 11 a.m. Wednesday could do little more than douse the flames, which took about two hours. The cause remained under investigation.

Phillips, who said the two-storey home was old and "just basically kindling," lashed out at the federal government for rejecting the community's plea for funding to upgrade 50 of its houses, saying First Nations housing is in crisis.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Lucky dog is trained well



Luke Simcoe
Metro | Toronto

Luna the dog is dog-gone lucky.

The precocious pup, an Australian shepherd-border collie mix, was hit by a GO train Dec. 7 in Toronto. Despite being pulled under the vehicle, she survived unscathed.

"It's a miracle," Luna's owner, Ayla Reznick, said. "I can't even imagine my life without Luna right now."

Luna slipped her leash while out for a walk. The dog walker tried to pursue her, Reznick said, but the pooch bolted.

Aided by members of the Lost and Found Pets of Ontario Facebook group, Reznick scoured the neighbourhood but didn't find Luna.

Luna eventually returned home on her own, and aside from a few mysterious scrapes and bruises, she was no worse for wear. She was given a clean bill of health from the vet the following day, Reznick said.

METRO EXPLAINS

What the asbestos ban means



May Warren
Metro | Toronto

On Thursday the federal government announced a plan to ban manufacturing any products containing asbestos, and its import or export by 2018.

Metro breaks down the news and what it means for you.

What is it? Asbestos refers to a group of minerals that, at its peak, was found in more than 3,000 applications.

Why is it dangerous? The World Health Organization declared asbestos a "human carcinogen" way back in 1987. Even small amounts of airborne asbestos fibres can cause lung cancer.

So there's a ban, yay us?

Canada is late to the game on the issue. The government's move comes after decades of lobbying from labour groups.

What else? The government pledges to create new health and safety regulations to limit contact workers have with existing asbestos on the job.

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We ignore dual realities at our peril

Rosemary Westwood relocates to the U.S. She chronicles her observations in a weekly column for Metro.

ROSEMARY WESTWOOD
From the U.S.



For a minute there, it appeared as if the only star president-elect Donald Trump could scrounge up to sing at his inauguration was the runner-up in 2010's America's Got Talent, Jackie Evancho.

Not exactly in keeping with the Trump Hotel motto "Never Settle."

And it felt so right. Who could possibly want to serenade into power the most dangerous president elected in my lifetime? Who could want to

sing those myth-making lyrics "land of the free" to a man in favour of voter suppression and media suppression, deporting an entire religion and jailing innocents, a man who takes his leadership cues from Vladimir Putin, who lies to his supporters in order to cement his own power?

The answer, it turns out, is Andrea Bocelli. I'll never hear that duet with Celine Dion the same way again.

It's still a bit gratifying to know that most of Hollywood, whose opinions I care little about otherwise, is MIA on this one.

Of course, Donald Trump's own celebrity has never really translated into widespread celebrity political love. (Aside from Kanye West's less-than-gushing support, Alec, the lesser of the Baldwins, and the actress from Clueless who wasn't Cher or Tai.)

But the lack of Hollywood support certainly didn't bother Trump's base, who seem to view celebrities (minus Trump himself) as de facto "elites" (a term now devoid of meaning, since it also appears to apply to every New Yorker, including nearly half of the city that's living in or near poverty).



Andrea Bocelli performs in Budapest. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Indeed, some might not care who sings about "the rockets' red glare" this time. What looks bad from where I'm sitting, clearly, looks com-

pletely different to someone who voted for Trump.

That acceptance comes with a few requirements.

The first is to remember that while I'm rolling my eyes at reports in the Daily Beast that Trump wanted Aretha Franklin to sing for him (Aretha?!), some of Trump's 46 per cent of the U.S. electorate are reading on Breitbart that President Obama's investigation into Russian hacking is just sour grapes after the Democrats lost the election.

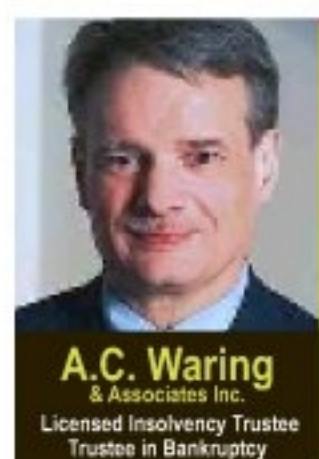
There are two American realities, and we ignore the

one we're not living in at our own peril.

Which brings us to the other requirement: Anyone outraged at the election results has some studying to do. Go read Fox News. Browse Red State. Click on a few Breitbart links. Even, God forbid, peruse Info Wars.

The day after the election, On The Media's Brooke Gladstone argued the radio show — which reports on the media — has a new goal: "To make what seems to have been invisible to us and everyone we know, visible."

It's a worthy goal for us all.



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Syrians who were evacuated from rebel-held neighbourhoods arrive in Khan al-Aassal region, in west Aleppo. AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Aleppo residents flee

Weeping, hobbling on crutches or dragging suitcases, hundreds of survivors of a devastating government bombardment and siege left the last sliver of opposition-held Aleppo on Thursday, an evacuation that sealed the end of the rebellion's most important stronghold and was a watershed moment in Syria's five-year-old civil war.

A smiling President Bashar Assad called it a historic event comparable to the birth of Christ and the revelation of the Qur'an.

A UN official described it as "a black chapter in the history of international relations."

Under a surrender deal brokered by Russia and Turkey, tens of thousands of residents and rebel fighters are being evacuated to opposition-controlled areas in the surrounding countryside.

Eastern Aleppo rose in revolt against Assad in 2012 and battled since then with the western, government-held part of the city in one of the most horrific and destructive fronts of the civil war.

The rebels' hold in Syria's onetime commercial powerhouse was a major point of pride, and at times it seemed an invulnerable part of what was once a growing opposition-held

patch of territory in the north.

But government forces finally surrounded eastern Aleppo and then battered it to pieces. The air and ground campaign by Syrian troops — backed by Russian warplanes and forces from Assad's regional allies — relentlessly wore away at the enclave.

Hundreds of civilians were killed, and tens of thousands fled to government-held areas. The pocket was reduced to a few blocks packed with the bloodied, exhausted and demoralized but also die-hard opposition forces.

"History is being made," an upbeat Assad proclaimed in a video. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

VOICES OF THE DISPLACED

Displaced residents describe violence and food shortages to the UNHCR

We had a house, but it was completely destroyed. It was very shocking to see our home turned to ruins. Bader, 12

I am very scared of what the future might hold for us, and especially for my daughters. Aziza, a single mother

We used to be given bags of bread, but then bread stopped and there was just rice. Then there was no rice. Mohammad, 16

DECODED by Genna Buck and Andrés Plana

DINOSAURS REALLY DID HAVE FEATHERS

A Chinese scientist browsing a market in Myanmar has stumbled onto **the find of the century**. What first appeared to be a fragment of a bird's tail suspended in 99-million-year old amber in fact belongs to a coelurosaur — a feathered, sparrow-sized dinosaur. **But what is amber and where does it get its enchanting ability to capture an ancient moment and freeze it in time?**

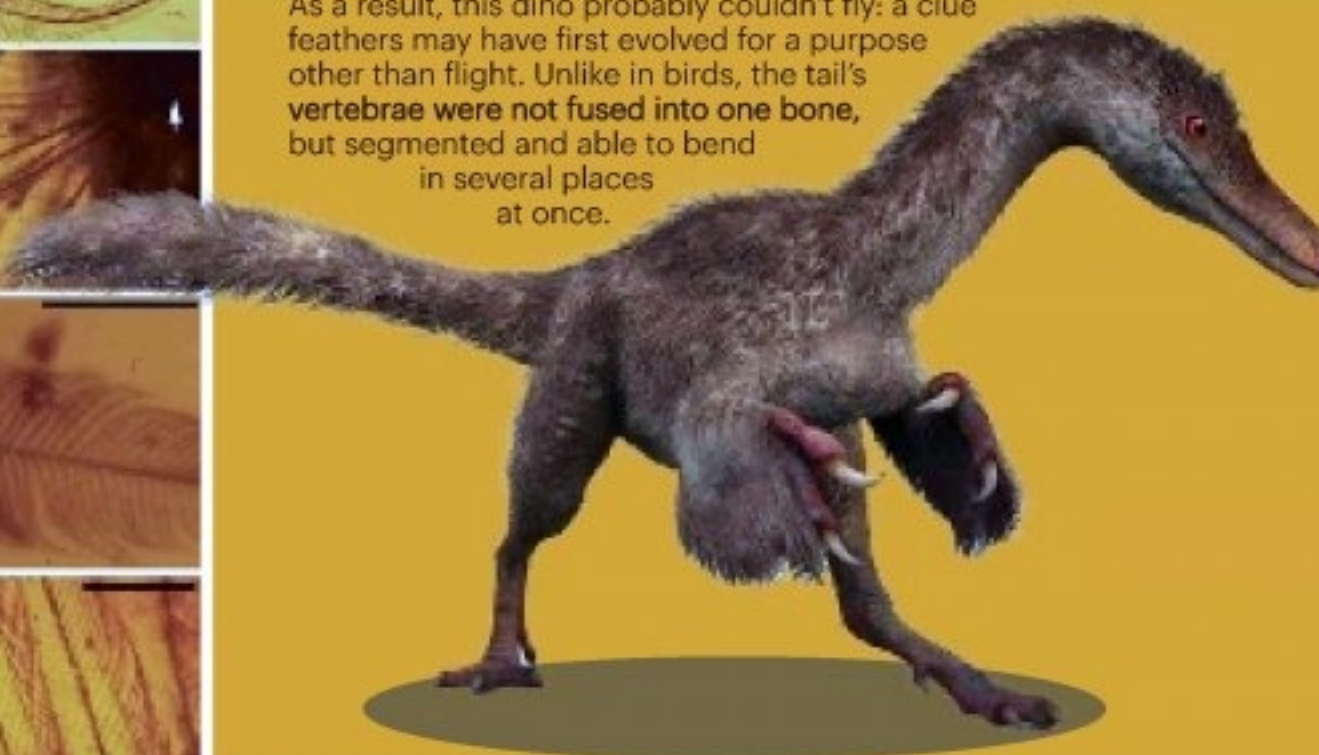


Amber starts out as sticky tree resin. Over many years, a series of chemical reactions turns hardened resin into glassy amber. Smelly, reactive chemicals, called volatiles, dissipate, and the rings of hydrogen and carbon that remain arrange themselves into long chains of molecules called polymers. Once the volatiles are gone and the **polymerization** is complete, the resin, sometimes with debris or dead critters trapped inside, is amber.

Fair feather find

Using microscopes and a CT scanner, scientists at the Royal Saskatchewan Museum were the first to ever see dinosaur feathers in glorious 3D. They're white and brown, and more delicately structured than modern bird feathers, lacking the strong central rod.

As a result, this dino probably couldn't fly: a clue feathers may have first evolved for a purpose other than flight. Unlike in birds, the tail's **vertebrae were not fused into one bone**, but segmented and able to bend in several places at once.



Who was this dinosaur?

A pocket-sized member of the T. rex's family, **coelurosauria**. It walked upright and feasted on insects.

Sorry, Jurassic Park fans, scientists are pretty sure **dino DNA can't survive in amber**. Earlier experiments that suggested this was possible seem to have picked up stray DNA from the lab.

FINDINGS

Your week in science



SUMUKHA J. N.

MAGIC MENAGERIE

Scientists have been known to give goofy names to genes (sonic hedgehog) and animals (Pieza kake). Now J.K. Rowling has given her seal of approval to another silly-sounding species: *Eriovixia gryffindori*, a spider that looks remarkably like the Hogwarts sorting hat.

SAD ZIKA STUDY

The most detailed study yet of pregnant women in Brazil with confirmed Zika virus has revealed a scary truth: more than half had a miscarriage, stillbirth, or baby with a devastating brain abnormality.

SOUND SMART

NOMENCLATURE

DEFINITION

Nomenclature is a scientific system for naming and categorizing something, like chemical compounds, animals or time periods. Biologists use binomial nomenclature (genus and species in italics) for living things like *Homo sapiens*.

USE IT IN A SENTENCE

The international community should adopt formal **nomenclature** for Pokemon. Their names are cutesy and random; they don't provide any useful information.

PHILOSOPHER CAT by Jason Logan

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CITIZEN SCIENTIST by Genna Buck

Why doesn't the sun fry the earth?

The sun injects a lot of energy into Earth, yet the temperature here is relatively stable. The Earth must be losing a similar amount of heat. How does that work? — Dexter

You're right. The Earth absorbs radiation from the sun and releases a similar amount out into space. But not exactly the same amount. And that's a problem.

Solar energy is constantly being soaked up and spat back out by the land and oceans. Some is reflected by clouds

and bright surfaces like polar ice caps, and some is absorbed by the cosy blanket of **greenhouse gases** that surrounds our planet. They keep the atmosphere at an average of 14 C, warmer than it otherwise would be (-18 C, the temperature on the atmosphere-less moon).

All in all, our planet exists in a state of **energy balance**. I think of it as a bathtub with the plug pulled and the tap on: We experience a consistent, comfortable temperature level because solar energy is

pouring in and draining out at the same rate. At least, that's what's supposed to happen.

You may have heard something about how we're pouring more and more greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide and methane into the air by burning fossil fuels and raising animals.

These gases have atoms that are loosely bound together, and when they heat up, they vibrate and move around. They release the energy as heat, which other greenhouse gases absorb. This continuous process of passing

heat back and forth between molecules keeps more of the sun's energy close to the Earth, with familiar consequences: Rising mercury, rising oceans, and doomsday if we don't do anything about it.

This process, **the greenhouse effect**, is also the reason the ocean isn't frozen. It sure is harder to deny something is real when you learn the details of how it works.

Science Question?
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metro WEEKEND

Your essential daily news

MOVIES MUSIC TELEVISION DIGITAL

That first flash of the Force...

IN FOCUS

A long time ago, in a galaxy not too far away, we were all wowed

Richard Crouse
For Metro Canada



February 3, 1959 and February 9, 1964. The day the music died and the date it was reborn on the Ed Sullivan Show, both days burned into the collective memories of pop culture fanatics everywhere.

But what about May 25, 1977? If you were a teenager then chances are you felt the earth shift. It was the day Star Wars opened, kicking off a cultural phenomenon that continues to this day.

This weekend the universe George Lucas unleashed in 1977 grows to include *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story*. Much-anticipated, the movie is the first of the standalone Star Wars Anthology films and is expected to decimate the competition, Death Star style.

Expect line-ups and packed theatres — box office seers estimate it could pull in somewhere between \$130 million to \$150 million at the U.S. box office this week — but no matter how wild the weekend gets, nothing will match the pandemonium that greeted Star Wars in May, 1977.

To paint a picture of the first blush of Star Wars mania I asked my Facebookers what they remember about that moment a long time ago, in a galaxy (not so) far, far away...

"I remember being so in awe of that legendary opening scene with the giant spaceship coming into picture from the top and filling up the entire screen... oooo, aaaaah," wrote Glenda Fordham. "The audience gasped in unison."

"Upon leaving the theatre, with my little mind totally blown, I was interviewed by the news," recollected Lesley Mitchell-Clarke, "where I think that I said, 'Anything is now possible cinematically.' I was all of 19."

"My stepbrother, who was seven at the time, was dead set against seeing it," says Tina Cooper, "and then of course saw it at least 50 times and dressed in Star Wars gear and played with Star Wars toys every single day for the rest of his childhood."

"The line-up went right around the block and we ended up sitting in the front row of the balcony," recalled Chris Ball. "I was mesmerized but dad was

bored. Part way through I guess he decided he might as well get comfortable. He took his jacket off and in the process knocked his popcorn over the balcony railing. We got a stern lecture from the manager and almost got thrown out. Fast forward 20 years (1997) and I am now the manager of the same theatre and handing out those stern lectures."

"I was six," remembered Sue Edworthy. "My Dad took me to see it. I fell asleep halfway through. He took me to see it again. I fell asleep halfway through. The seventh time, I finally saw the whole thing. Clearly he had no problem seeing it again, and again, and again."

"It was the first film that I went to more than once in its initial run," said Adrian Gruff. "In the scene where the X-Wings enter the Death Star's trench, I disengaged from the screen just so I could watch everyone's heads do the sideways bob and twist that mine had done on first viewing."

"It was the first time that I had a true inkling as to the energy that religion refers to as 'God.'"

MORE STAR WARS
PHOTOS ON
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Rogue One: A Star Wars Story will give another new generation that trademark thrill of facing up to the Force for the very first time. CONTRIBUTED

MOVIE RATINGS by Richard Crouse

Rogue One: A Star Wars Story ★★★★★
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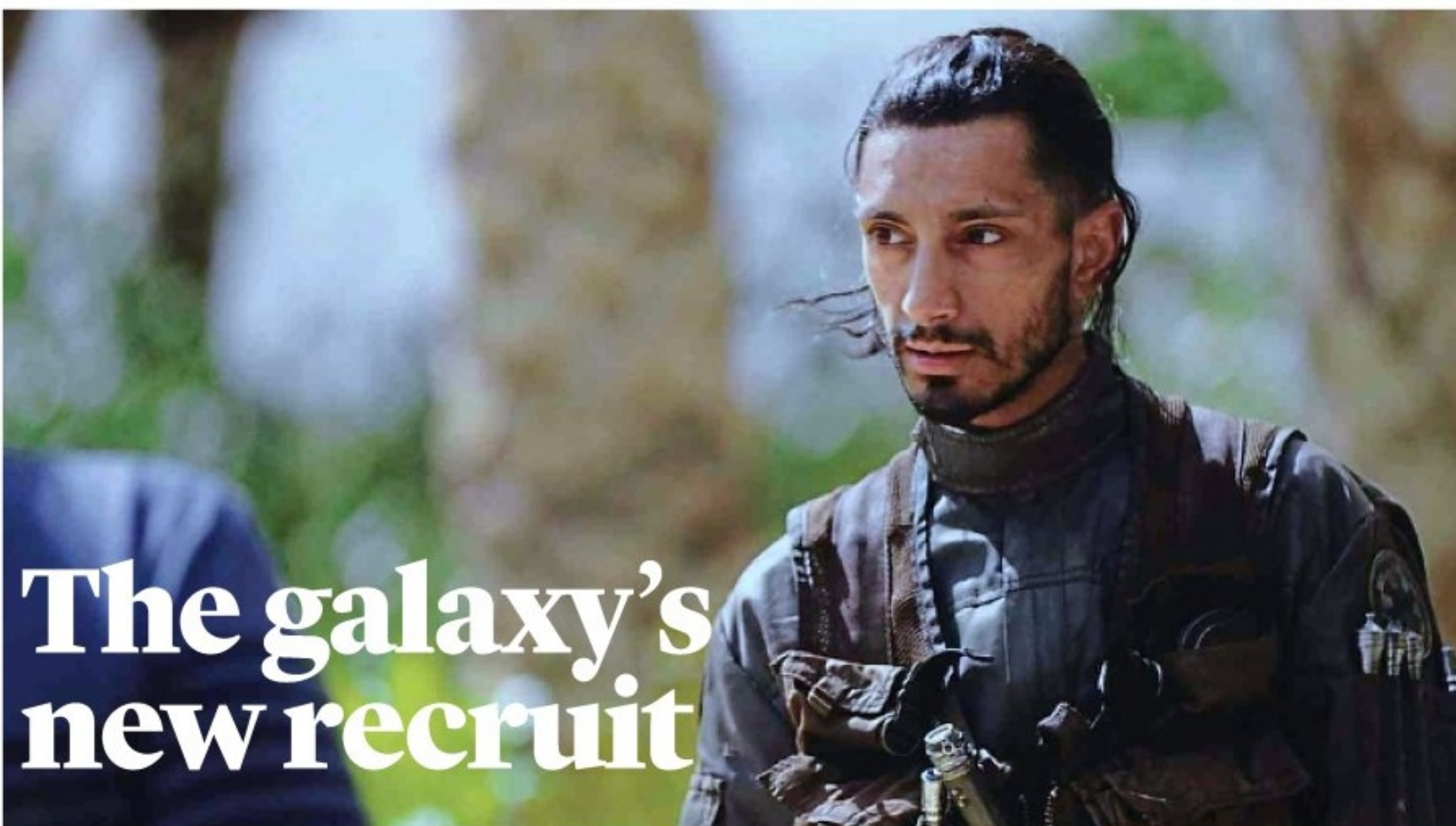


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The galaxy's new recruit

In *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story*, British-Pakistani actor Riz Ahmed plays Bodhi Rook, a former Imperial pilot who takes his technical skills across to the Rebel Alliance. CONTRIBUTED

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INTERVIEW

Riz Ahmed says he was a troublemaker on Star Wars set

Richard Crouse
 For Metro Canada



Like a lot of kids Riz Ahmed liked Star Wars. Unlike most kids he grew up to be part of the franchise, playing pilot Bodhi Rook in *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story*.

"I was a fan," says Ahmed, also known as Riz MC, who earlier this year starred in HBO's *The Night Of*. "I remember watching the films the first time round with my older brother. I was about six or seven years old. They were kind of my only memory of watching any movie at all. They

left a massive impact on me. I remember running around with my brother for years, acting out our own weird sci-fi stories. Even though I didn't understand the storyline — I was too young — the level of imagination and detail that went into those movies.... It made an impression."

Yet, while the originals left an impression on the younger Ahmed, it was only when he joined the universe himself that he realized his level of fandom might not have been quite at the level he had thought.

"It's only now that I have met real Star Wars fans that I realize I wasn't really a fan," he says. "I thought I was. Star Wars fans are dedicated, loyal fans. I think the kind of vibe I've gotten so far is that they are really excited to see a film that both preserves the legacy and the inheritance of the Star Wars saga but is also something a little different, fresh,

distinctive and separate from the other films. I think that can be a really tricky balance to achieve but I think they have really done that."

Rogue One is the first standalone Star Wars Anthology film — upcoming movies in the expanded cinematic universe will focus on Han Solo and Boba Fett — and takes place after the formation of the Galactic Empire, shortly before the events of Episode IV: *A New Hope*.

The Rebel Alliance has recruited former criminal Jyn Erso (Felicity Jones) to collaborate with a team to retrieve the blueprints of the Death Star, the Empire's armoured battle station capable of destroying entire planets.

Ahmed plays a recruit, a former Imperial pilot with strong technical skills. Producer Kathleen Kennedy calls the character "a troublemaker."

"It is interesting she calls

Bodhi Rook a troublemaker," Ahmed laughs. "I sometimes wonder if she is talking about me on the film set. Bodhi is somebody who is thrust into a really unfamiliar set of circumstances. He is just an Imperial cargo pilot, an average Joe trying to earn a living. It is a company town he lives in, the occupied planet of Jedha, so he works for the Empire. He's really thrust into a new set of circumstances that force him to reconsider his allegiances and what he's doing in these turbulent times."

Working beside Ahmed are Diego Luna, Donnie Yen and Forest Whitaker, making *Rogue One* the most diverse of all the Star Wars films.

"I think it just makes sense that our film reflects the society around us," says the British Pakistani actor, "and also the audience watching the films. A story like Star Wars is a global story. It belongs to all of us."

"Audiences around the world are excited about Star Wars so it makes sense that when they think about who might be the best actors for these roles they cast their net really wide all around the world. 'Yeah, we'll have Ben Mendelsohn from Australia, Forest Whitaker from L.A. and Mads Mikkelsen from over here.' I'm lucky to have been caught up in this net as well."



“It's only now that I have met real Star Wars fans that I realize I wasn't really a fan. I thought I was.”

Riz Ahmed

Rising stars from across the planet

Star Wars has always had a wide variety of faces in its films, but, besides a few outliers, the diversity was mainly limited to that of the various creatures inhabiting the planets. *Rogue One* really bursts through the arbitrary barrier with director Gareth Edwards using a large international cast, including Mexican, Danish, British-Pakistani, Chinese, Australian, African-American and British performers. Meet a few of the new faces: THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



DIEGO LUNA AND ALAN TUDYK

The rebellion's cop team — one man and his droid

Mexican actor Diego Luna wanted so badly to be in a Star Wars film, he said he would have paid to be part of it. He plays Cassian, an intelligence officer for the rebellion, or, a spy charged with leading the dangerous mission that culminates in the rebels stealing the plans for the Death Star. "He's a very lonely character. His best friend is a droid basically — that says a lot about him — and a droid that he reprogrammed!" Luna said. That droid is K-2SO (above with Luna either side of Felicity Jones' heroine Jyn Erso), voiced by American Alan Tudyk, hailed as one of the breakouts of the film for his deadpan humour. "I'd like to think that we're a team. Kind of like a cop team, and I'm the smart-ass cop!" said Tudyk.



BEN MENDELSON AND MADS MIKKELSEN

Death Star's darkest duo

Aussie Ben Mendelsohn's Orson Krennic is the baddie of the group, the one in charge of making sure the Death Star works. Mads Mikkelsen's Galen Erso is a scientist who tried to leave the killer-making ways behind, only to be drawn back in. "As a scientist you have morals but you just dive into a project that will consume you and before it's too late you realize what you're creating," Denmark's Mikkelsen said.



DONNIE YEN AND JIANG WEN

Chinese actors break barriers

Edwards, inspired by George Lucas's love of Akira Kurosawa's *The Hidden Fortress*, wanted to have two actors who would squabble but still venture out together on a mission. It resulted in Donnie Yen's blind "warrior monk" Chirrut and Jiang Wen's always heavily armed Baze Malbus. "I realized, 'This is something very special. I'm going to make history,'" Yen said. "Hey, I'm the first Chinese actor in the Star Wars universe. That is so rewarding."

QUARANTINE

Heard told Coast is clear for her dogs

Actress Amber Heard appears set to return to Australia's Gold Coast to star in the DC Comics blockbuster movie *Aquaman* a year after she was convicted in the same tourist town of smuggling her pet Yorkshire terriers Pistol and Boo into the country.

The movie, which will also feature *Game of Thrones* television star Jason Momoa in the lead role, will be shot next year at Village Roadshow Studios near Gold Coast city in a deal that will cost the Australian government 22 million Australian dollars (\$16 million), Treasurer Scott Morrison said Thursday.

Heard, 30, pleaded guilty in a Gold Coast court in April to falsifying an immigration document to conceal the dogs when she and her then husband Johnny Depp flew into Australia in 2014 for the filming of the latest *Pirates of the Caribbean* movie

in which Depp played pirate Jack Sparrow.

She avoided jail under a deal that included Heard and Depp videoing an awkward public warning against others breaking Australia's strict quarantine laws.

Morrison said Thursday that a "miniature motor home" would be provided for Pistol and Boo if Heard decided to bring them back through the proper quarantine channels.

"We will have a home for them if Amber would like to bring them on to the film set," Morrison told reporters.

The scandal over the dogs was lampooned as Australia's "war on terriers" and unleashed



Amber Heard.
AP FILE

personal hostility between Depp and Agriculture Minister Barnaby Joyce.

Joyce, who is now Australia's deputy prime minister, prompted countless parodies by stating: "It's time that Pistol and Boo buggered off back to the U.S." He then warned that the dogs would be euthanized if they didn't flee the country within 72 hours, which they did with only a few hours to spare.

Depp quipped that ruddy-faced Joyce appeared to be "in-bred with a tomato" and voiced fears that "he might explode."

Morrison said on Thursday that he was not concerned by how Joyce might react to Pistol and Boo returning.

"No, everyone knows the rules. Those rules apply to everybody as they did last time," Morrison said.

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INTERVIEW

Emotional Smith relishes his role



Will Smith as Howard and Jacob Latimore as Raffi in *Collateral Beauty*. CONTRIBUTED

Will Smith had already begun researching his role for *Collateral Beauty* when he learned that his father was terminally ill.

Smith said at the film's world premiere in New York on Monday that he had to channel the emotions of that tragic news into a demanding film role. Smith's father, Willard Carroll Smith Jr., died on Nov. 7.

"My father was diagnosed and given six weeks, so you know, to be hit with that in the process and then what we decided to do was just use the preparation of the character to actually deal with what my father was experiencing," Smith said. "It became our way of saying goodbye, essentially. It was a really beautiful confluence of art and life."

Smith stars in the film as a father who suffers a great tragedy and begins to question the point of existence.

"It is such a beautiful concept. It's a guy that experiences a loss and gets furious at the universe, and writes these letters to Love, Time and Death, and his mind is so twisted that he mails the letters. And then, Love, Time and Death respond. You know,

it's that beautiful Christmas twist to it, but dealing with real issues," Smith said.

The film also stars Helen Mirren in the role of Death. She admitted to loving the script, and felt it shared the same vibe as Christmas classics like *It's a Wonderful Life* and *A Christmas Carol*.

"There was something very, very true in the centre of it. And kind of as a Christmas movie, you know it's kind of a pretty cool Christmas gift of a movie," Mirren said.

Edward Norton, who plays Smith's best friend and partner in the film, also said he saw a strong similarity with the film to holiday classics like *It's a Wonderful Life*.

"They straddle this very difficult balance between, obviously being very heart-winning and heart-warming and hopeful. But if you think about it, they touch on very dark and difficult things. Jimmy Stewart is in such despair he's going to a bridge to jump, right? But somehow they manage to be about deep and important things, while also being a lot of fun," Norton said.



Edward Norton, director David Frankel and Will Smith behind the scenes on the set of drama *Collateral Beauty*, from New Line Cinemas, Village Roadshow Pictures and Warner Bros. Pictures. BARRY WETCHER

Death, love and grief all part of the process

FILM DEVELOPMENT

Star-studded cast opened up script to improvement

Richard Crouse
For Metro Canada



Collateral Beauty had a long Hollywood history before director David Frankel came on

board. Hugh Jackman was attached at one point and Rachel McAdams had been approached to play a part.

The long development came to an end when Will Smith signed on to play Howard Inlet, a charismatic advertising kingpin who becomes despondent after the death of his six-year-old daughter.

"When I came on it, it felt like it was written in stone," says Frankel. "Everybody loved the screenplay and we were going in three months and then people started whispering, 'I wish we could fix that.' So it turned out to be a pretty normal development process where we tried a lot of stuff."

"Once the actors got involved, Professor Will Smith, Professor Edward Norton and Professor Kate Winslet, there was a lot more writing. Mostly condensing. Edward had this brilliant vision of the movie as a screwball comedy, which I think was really smart. Will always said, 'We have to make the first half of the movie as funny as possible so that we don't kill people.' We worked on that."

The changes continued into the shooting. In the story Howard spends his nights practising self-therapy, writing angry letters to the abstractions of Time,



Of course Will said, 'God works in mysterious ways.' But Will Smith got his way. Big surprise.

David Frankel

Love and Death demanding answers as to why his child was taken. In the original script he met the abstractions, personified by Jacob Latimore, Keira Knightley and Helen Mirren, in a different order than in the finished film.

"It was written where he first ran into Love, then Time then Death," says Frankel. "We shot them in the order, Death, Time, Love so as we were approaching Love Will and I were still arguing about whether Love should be first or last in the sequence."

"We had prepped for six months up to that moment thinking Love was first. He came to me the day before and said, 'I think Love should be last.' I fought him tooth and nail about it because I really thought that moment on the train when he confronts Death was the pivotal moment and then it rained and because of the weather (the shots) wouldn't have matched. The sequence wouldn't have made sense."

"Of course Will said, 'God

works in mysterious ways.' But Will Smith got his way. Big surprise."

The movie details the anguish Howard feels and the steps his friends take to help him reconnect with the world.

"I have seen some pretty profound grief," says Frankel. "My wife lost her mom six years ago and grief really can distort someone's connection to the universe. I learned you don't just get over it. That's why the line Helen (Mirren) has, I think is the most profound line in the movie. 'Nothing is really ever dead if you look at it right.'"

"That I thought was really beautiful. That is how we all live on, in memory, not in fact."

It may seem like an odd subject for a Christmas film but Frankel says, "In holiday movies you always want a sense of hope. That's ultimately what we dreamed of for this movie."

"I know when Will saw it for the first time he ran to hug Willow who was in the audience with him. People want to connect and realize the fragility of our time here."

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The making of a female serial killer

FILM

The Eyes of my Mother is about an evil woman with good intent

Chris Alexander
For Metro Canada



Ever since Roman Polanski trapped Catherine Deneuve in a Paris apartment and watched her lose her mind in 1965's *Repulsion*, horror cinema has had an enduring infatuation with the psychotic woman.

There's something unsettling about this dynamic, taking our hard-wired societal perceptions of femininity and twisting them, making them unstable and often evil.

Director Nicolas Pesce's alarming black and white psychodrama *The Eyes of my Mother* is another in this unending line of crazy-lady shockers, and it's also one of the best films of 2016.

Charting the damaged upbringing of an upstate New York farm girl named Francisca and her even more broken and lethal adult life, the film stars newcomer Kika Magalhaes in a bravura yet muted performance.

Magalhaes is even more impressive because no matter Francisca's transgressions, she manages to make the character sympathetic and someone we — against our better judgement — deeply care about.

"I never saw her as serial killer," Magalhaes told Metro



The Eyes of my Mother actress Kika Magalhaes says she went a little bit crazy preparing for the role. HANDOUT

on the cusp of the film's limited release this Friday.

"I saw her as loving. All the horrific acts she commits come from a deep need for affection. She doesn't know how to express love because she was never shown this.

"She can't bear to see people leave her and I think that she thinks that she's always doing the right thing. It's not as simple as just good and evil."

The *Eyes of my Mother* does see Francisca committing mur-

der and worse in order to sate her illness, but the film is not exploitation, nor does it revel in a high body count and gratuitous bloodshed.

Still, no child should be let near the movie as it's about as dark and depressing as the genre gets. Credit Pesce and Magalhaes' close collaboration during pre-production on ensuring that Francisca is a fully fleshed out female, not just some nickel and dime boogeyman.

"I was on board when the film was just an idea," the actress explains.

"Nick and I talked and developed the character together. And the script changed so much from the beginning to where it ended up. Originally, it was all killing, killing and more killing.

"Then, we had a religious allegory driving it and then it just became her story. Nicolas made sure I watched all the key Hitchcock films, *Under the Skin*, the Lars von Trier mov-

ies and then I researched serial killers like Ted Bundy and maniacs like Charles Manson. To be honest, I felt like I was going a bit crazy myself during the process!"

Since its divisive premiere at Sundance earlier this year ("at least 30 people walked out," Magalhaes says).

The *Eyes of my Mother* has gone on to festival success and great acclaim and was just released theatrically in the U.S. last week.

But because it was Magalhaes' first feature film and because she was so creatively involved, the actress is genuinely concerned that she has been

spoiled by such a wonderful first cinematic dance partner.

"I've been getting offers and am working a lot on other projects. But it's a problem. I keep trying to offer my ideas while we work and, well, it's just not the same. It's very frustrating, in fact."



All the horrific acts she commits come from a deep need for affection.

Actress Kika Magalhaes

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WHAT TO BUY FOR THE ULTIMATE FILM BUFF THIS FESTIVE SEASON

Buying that perfect gift for a film buff can be a vexing task, so we went right to the heart of Hollywood to get tips on the creative ways in which some directors and stars might enchant a fellow movie lover this holiday season. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Damien Chazelle

The Whiplash and La La Land director reached back to his own filmmaking roots and recommended a Bolex camera, like the kind he used to make movies on. "To me, that's about returning to the basics. You just put a camera on your shoulder, you go out on the street, there's no sound, you just film whatever you see," Chazelle said. "love the old fashioned, rusty old cameras. Maybe no one else does but I'd give them that." Vintage Bolex cameras can run around \$400 on eBay.



Gugu Mbatha-Raw

In honour of its 70th anniversary, the Miss Sloane star said she'd go with Frank Capra's It's a Wonderful Life. "For me, for Christmas, that's just the ultimate to be able to watch that movie. It's so uplifting. That would be my gift," she said. "It's so beautiful, it's such a classic and as I say, it's really an inspiring story about family. I think it's lovely." The 60th Anniversary edition is available on DVD for \$17.85.



Alden Ehrenreich and Lily Collins

Rules Don't Apply star Alden Ehrenreich, who has a passion for all things old Hollywood, said he'd buy George Stevens, Jr.'s Conversations with the Great Moviemakers of Hollywood's Golden Age and its companion book The Next Generation. Co-star Collins said she likes physical gifts that can double as art. "I have a collection of vintage film cameras and old film strips and reels and I've given them as gifts if I find a really hard to find, rare one," she said.



Pablo Larrain

It might not be the easiest on the list, but the Jackie director said his ideal gift for someone would be to arrange a screening of a silent movie with a full orchestra. "I saw Metropolis like that," he said. "It was awesome."

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Join a cult

Not all iconic movies were box-office blockbusters when they were first released. Sometimes it takes a mixture of luck, patience, finding the right audience and big changes in the industry before a film really takes off. Here are four movies that earned cult status against all odds:

The Rocky Horror Picture Show

(1975): Though the stage musical it was based on was a sensation, the movie flopped twice before it became part of the midnight movie craze of the late '70s. Midnight screenings, lax distribution rules, and audience participation went on to make it the longest-running release in film history.



CONTRIBUTED BY HOLLYWOOD SUITE

And Now For Something Completely Different

(1971): Independently financed by a Playboy executive who was certain Monty Python's Flying Circus could be repackaged for American audiences, this movie proved to be a dud on its initial release. However, once the Monty Python TV show was broadcast on PBS in its original format, the film was re-released to great financial and cultural success among fans eager for more.

Attack of the Killer Tomatoes (1978): This schlock horror parody recouped its modest budget, but was critically panned and didn't make any real box office waves. That is until younger audiences discovered the home video release. The film's second life on video-store shelves generated enough buzz to justify the filming of sequels a decade later, and videogame and cartoon spinoffs in the '90s.

Heavy Metal (1981): This Canadian classic had a respectable box office draw for an animated sci-fi fantasy film based on a counter-culture magazine, but that success was eclipsed by a soundtrack album full of massive '80s rock hits. The popularity of the soundtrack was nearly solely responsible for the film's cult status, since music licensing issues kept it from home video for over a decade, only allowing it to be seen occasionally on TV, or as a midnight movie in theatres.

Rediscover some of the most beloved cult films of all time. The Hollywood Suite Free Preview is on now until Jan. 5. Enjoy the best movies of the '70s, '80s, '90s and 2000s uncut and commercial-free on four HDTV channels and On Demand, available on most TV providers.

See all these films on Hollywood Suite this month. Catch a cult film triple bill of *And Now For Something Completely Different*, *Attack of the Killer Tomatoes* and *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, Dec. 17 on the Hollywood Suite '70s Movies channel and ring in the new year with *Heavy Metal* on the Hollywood Suite '80s Movies channel Dec. 31. Learn more at hollywoodsuite.ca/freepreview.

HOLLYWOODSUITE



Can Moonlight spark a black gay renaissance?

ANALYSIS

Coming-of-age story explores issue rarely seen in mainstream

Neil Armstrong
For Torstar News Service

The acclaimed drama *Moonlight* has become a leading awards contender this season, giving hope for diversity in the year after #OscarsSoWhite.

But the story it tells, of a young black man slowly coming to terms with his homosexuality, is one rarely seen in mainstream culture — until recently that is. On film, on television and onstage, there seems to be a sudden convergence of art forms telling the stories of black queer people, especially males.

Moonlight joins the similarly themed 2015 indie film *Blackbird*, plus the hip-hop drama *Empire* on Fox, which introduced a gay love interest for Jussie Smollett's character Jamal earlier this year, and the complicated, diverse LGBTQ characters of *Orange Is the New Black*.

Onstage in Toronto, black queer characters were front and centre in productions this year including *Secrets of a Black Boy*, *How Black Mothers Say I Love You* and, notably, in *Black Boys*, a "timely exploration of queer male blackness" that just ended a run at Buddies in Bad Times Theatre.

Are these productions part of a "black queer renaissance" as some have called it?

In an interview with the *Los Angeles Times* before *Moonlight* had its first public screening at the Telluride Film Festival, director Barry Jenkins said, "This movie was made for anybody who has ever felt other or like they can't be themselves and be accepted in society."

Compared to now, in the '90s such content was almost nonexistent.

There were exceptions, such as Jeffrey Wright's portrayal of the title artist in the 1996 movie *Basquiat*, and Queen Latifah's portrayal of a very proud lesbian in *Set It Off*.

And then there was Will Smith's intriguing yet problematic lead in the 1993 movie *Six Degrees of Separation* (played onstage by Courtney B. Vance).

At the time there was some controversy over Smith's portrayal of a gay character — a



Actor Ashton Sanders plays one of three stages of Chiron, the focus of *Moonlight*, Barry Jenkins' lauded coming-of-age story. CONTRIBUTED

lying, promiscuous one at that — and what it might mean for his career. If anything, it helped.

Fast forward to now and Les Fabian Brathwaite of *Out Magazine* writes: "For the first time since perhaps the Harlem Renaissance, the souls of queer black folk have been depicted on our own terms as we take control of our narratives. . . This is the new renaissance."

Thomas Olajide, one of the stars of *Black Boys*, thinks it's a matter of serendipity to have a play he and his co-creators had been working on for four years come out at the same time that *Moonlight* is picking up award season buzz, including six Golden Globe nomina-

tions this week.

"It just seems like it's the climate for these stories to be unearthing very naturally," he says. "Perhaps we're all reaching a level of fatigue with not hearing those stories."

His co-star, Stephen Jackman-Torkoff, says "it's not just males but a lot of female queer people of colour (who) are really driving" the surge of such stories, at least on Toronto stages.

"Our communities have always existed," says playwright d'bi young anitafrika (*She Mami Wata & The Pussy Witch Hunt*). "Whose visibility validates this idea of a renaissance?"

Having worked in the arts for 20 years, she notes, "What I can say is I do see a change in the

visibility of black queerness in more dominant public spaces."

But Kimahli Powell, who directed *Secrets of a Black Boy* and sits on the board of the Inside Out LGBT Film Festival, says we shouldn't expect this supposed renaissance to continue.

"No doubt that *Moonlight* is a seminal work and its breakthrough is important," he says. "Yet when these moments happen — and they have in the past — we hope Hollywood has embraced storytelling and yet things remain the same."

"#OscarsSoWhite was just last year."

In terms of queer cinema, Powell notes people thought *Brokeback Mountain* would open doors for more movies representing LGBT people. That was a decade ago and little has changed.

"We definitely should celebrate that these stories happen to be shared at this moment but, unless there is a deeper shift in decision-making, we shouldn't expect more black queer art anytime soon."



This movie was made for anybody who has ever felt other or like they can't be themselves and be accepted in society.

Barry Jenkins, *Moonlight* director



Boutique stays in Tel Aviv

For decades, the tourist landscape in Tel Aviv was dominated by mediocre beachfront hotels. Over the last several years, beautiful boutique properties have changed the city's hospitality scene and contributed to Tel Aviv's increasingly chic image. These accommodations are sleeker, smaller and often-affordable. **SARAH TRELEAVEN/FOR METRO**



MIDTOWN

Brown Beach House

This property is perfect for visitors looking for a hip and affordable small beachside hotel in an increasingly sophisticated part of the city. The giant neon pink flamingo out front and the sunny yellow furnishings set a playful tone. Some rooms have enormous ocean-facing balconies, and all have bright yellow or blue accents. The neighbourhood is ideal for exploring both the south of the city (hipper) and the north (more polished).



ALLENBY AND ROTHCHILD

Hotel Montefiore

The original boutique beachhead is the Montefiore, which opened in 2008 and sits on a quiet side street. The Montefiore is all grace and discretion. The lobby restaurant — a fusion menu offering terrific pork and cabbage gyoza and wonderfully rich truffled goat cheese ravioli — is full of palm fronds and Art Deco light fixtures. The hotel's bedrooms are equally elegant, and in-room libraries offer a great selection of authors.



STEPS FROM ROTHCHILD BOULEVARD

The Norman

The Norman is comprised of two 1920s buildings that still retain their original grandeur. The palette of creams and soft greys is complemented by Bauhaus and Art Deco touches. This 50-room hotel serves Mediterranean and Japanese cuisine, and showcases work by Israeli artists. Further cultural enrichment is provided through bespoke tours, including food tours of the Carmel Market and historic perspectives on Jaffa.



CENTRAL TEL AVIV

The Poli House

Canadian Karim Rashid is the designer responsible for The Poli House — the high-design (pod chairs, neon) new property that opened its doors in November. This stunning boutique hotel was carved out of a 1934 Bauhaus wonder in central Tel Aviv, and is the product of a three-year modernization process that remained loyal to the building's heritage. The focus of this 40-room property is a massive panoramic rooftop space with an infinity pool, cocktail bar and tapas menu. There's also a ground floor "cultural centre," complete with gallery space and design bookstore.



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Beautiful scenery, cultural learnings

NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

National Park hosted by all-Inuit Parks Canada staff

Jenn Smith Nelson
For Torstar News Service

No images of rolling green hillsides, sheer cliffs, magnificent fjords or massive icebergs were taken on this day. Instead, my ears did all the work. After four days of maritime adventures on Labrador's scenic but stark and rugged coast, alongside ancient rocks more than 3.8 billion years old, it was time to listen.

The Torngats had stories to tell.

The immense tree-barren beauty and remoteness of the Torngat Mountains National Park and its offerings are both an adventurer's dream and pure form of cultural tourism.

Inuit gifted the park to Canada after a successful land claim in 2005. Since becoming the country's 42nd national park, it's become a major draw, where visitors can spend time with elders who call the unspoiled landscape home.

Through song, storytelling and firsthand experience, visitors learn about Inuit culture, history and the environment.

"Spending time with Inuit elders reinforces the connection of people to the land and place," says Martin Loughheed, Parks Canada's visitor experi-



Elder, Sophie Keelan was born on Sallikuluk, aka Rose Island — an important archaeological site and final resting place for over 600 Inuit. In addition to its stunning landscapes, the Torngat Mountains region offer opportunities to learn about Inuit culture, history and the environment. ALL PHOTOS JENN SMITH NELSON/FOR TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

ence manager.

Nestled into St. John's Harbour in Saglek Bay is the base camp, gateway to the photogenic Torngats. Hosted by all-Inuit Parks Canada staff, it's also home to a mix of visitors, including elders, youth, researchers, base-camp staff, performers and guests. Camp integration and community togetherness happens quickly here, making it feel like an adult version of summer camp.

"Being in a remote location creates a sense of camaraderie among guests, adds Loughheed. "Friendships are forged that continue long after their time together."

Weather-dependent excursions

include hiking and venturing out to sea to take in the panorama, look for wildlife, and explore nearby islands and ancient Inuit villages.

For how incredible and vast the region is, it's equally treacherous. From polar bears to raging seas, moody fog and weather, it's not to be underestimated. Thanks to today's non-stop rain, it's too risky to leave camp, so the Parks folks gather everyone in the visitors' centre to watch a video presentation on Hebron, a nearby island.

Settled by a protestant sect of German Moravians in 1830, Hebron had once been the northernmost settlement in

all of Labrador, and home to a flourishing Inuit community that enjoyed a traditional life in the rich fishing village.

In 1959 however, politicians working in collusion with the Moravians gathered residents in the church and advised them they'd be relocated to southern locations, such as Nain, Hopedale and Makkovik, in order to be closer to services.

Residents had no choice but leave their homes. Families were torn apart and once resettled, left unsupported. Great hardship and tragedy followed, with repercussions still felt today. Through storytelling and acknowledgement, healing and reconciliation have begun.

A man from the video looks familiar. Glancing over my shoulder, John Jararuse, an elder, sits three rows back.

Sophie Keelan is another elder also staying at base camp. After the video, our paths collide and she tells me she'd like to share her story.

Keelan is Jararuse's cousin. At 11 years old, they were separated by leaving Hebron.

At 68 years old, this memory is painfully fresh. "It was a sad departure, the saddest time," Keelan says, recalling as her family left on the boat Trepassey.

"They promised us good housing and jobs, but when we got to Makkovik, there was

no housing at all. We had to live in a tent."

Tears begin to well in her eyes and then mine. "We lost our identity. We lost our family."

Still emotional, it's the second last day and a boat ride to Hebron means we will visit Keelan and Jararuse's home.

My place, as it's been all week, is at the top of the boat's bow, eyes ahead watching for wildlife and taking in views. By now it's also become my spot for introspection, perspective and internal reset.

Being here does something to you.

Arriving at Hebron, it's easy to imagine the once-vibrant life that thrived along its scenic shoreline, now littered with abandoned buildings and a giant church in the distance.

We explore the beautiful island and then are summoned to the church. Jararuse is sitting at the front, where he addresses us in a soft-spoken voice. "This used to be our church. Everyone was welcome here."

Not long after, Jararuse is beside me on the boat. Watching him, his eyes are transfixed on the shoreline, as they once likely were 57 years ago.

It's my turn to say goodbye a day later and Parks Canada Supt. Gary Baikie's words repeat in my head, "We hope you go home with a memorable experience."

Beyond an adventurous trip that included amazing excursions, seeing polar bears and aurora borealis, the region and its people encouraged a truly meaningful journey.

THINGS TO DO IN THE TORNGAT MOUNTAINS

Visitors from around the world are drawn to the Torngat Mountains Base Camp and Research Station for the remoteness, adventure, and the opportunity to connect with nature, wildlife, and elders and youth from Nunatsiavut and Nunavik. Parks Canada staff plan daily itineraries and if the weather is favourable excursions to nearby islands are on the agenda. JENN NELSON SMITH/FOR TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



1 Iceberg and wildlife watching

Being out on boats nearly every day provides numerous opportunities to look for wildlife, such as polar bears, wolves, caribou, minke whales, seals and if you can believe it, even black bears (this is the only place in the world they exist north of the tree line).



2 Island excursions

Each morning, the lunchroom's whiteboard details the day's outings. Standout day trips include boating to glorious Silluak (North Arm) where the beauty of the Saglek Fjord astounds visitors. There, they can hike to a waterfall, pick fresh sub-Arctic berries, fish for abundant char and enjoy a beach fish fry complete with bannock made on the spot. Visits to other incredibly scenic spots like Sallikuluk (Rose Island) or Ramah are also usually included.



3 Take in the views

The fact is no matter where you are in this part of the country, striking views exist and hiking can be done most anywhere. Even at base camp, there are hikes to a nearby waterfall, a hilltop inukshuk and Torr Bay that provide the opportunity to get up a little higher and take in the view from above. Visitors can also rent an onsite helicopter (at additional cost) to fly up and around the magnificent region to take in the beauty of the Torngats peaks, valleys and waterways.

5

HOTTEST DESTINATIONS FOR TRAVEL IN 2017

Want to travel in the new year, but still not sure exactly where you're headed? Perhaps this list can help. From the in-your backyard destinations to the far, far away, here are some of the world's must-see destinations in 2017.

LOREN CHRISTIE/FOR METRO

**1 Portugal**

Due to cheap hotel rates and mouth-watering cuisine Portugal has risen to the top of many travellers' lists. Air Transat is increasing its direct flight service from Montreal and Toronto to both Porto and Lisbon and Air Canada Rouge is adding new flights to the Portuguese capital in summer 2017. For foodies, Exodus Travels has launched a collection of guilt-free vacations for people who want to hike, eat and drink their way through Portugal's Douro Valley, a UNESCO World Heritage Site known for its award-winning wine.

**2 Iceland**

Thanks to its' stunning and varied natural beauty and a series of viral ad campaigns Iceland continues to be a top draw. Research by youth travel operator Contiki has revealed that the most desired travel experience for 18-35 year olds in Canada is to bathe in Iceland's famous Blue Lagoon.

**3 Egypt**

G Adventures reports an eight percent increase in travellers year over year heading to Egypt. Although numbers aren't what they were pre-revolution, it's a great time to visit some of the world's most historic monuments while avoiding the crowds and helping this former tourism giant get back on its feet.

**4 Cambodia**

A recent survey by Booking.com ranks Cambodia as a top pick for 2017. The recent discovery of an ancient city below the stunning temple complex of Angkor Wat has further heightened interest among Canadians. Before you go check out First They Killed My Father, a biography about the Cambodian genocide.

**5 Canada**

With the 150th anniversary of Confederation taking place there's never been a better time to explore at home. The epicentre of action will be the nation's capital with more than 150 events planned, but there will be plenty going on elsewhere, with national parks waving entrance fees and Montreal celebrating its 375th.

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Cheap, chic and party-time central

BELGRADE

Floating clubs keep the fun going all night long

Tables with posh patrons spill out of cafes onto cobblestoned sidewalks. Roaming musicians ply tourists for tips against a backdrop of restored art nouveau buildings. Across town, the thump of techno beats keeps the young and well-heeled dancing until dawn.

Welcome to Belgrade.

The city is still dirt cheap for visitors, but its chic future is arriving fast. In some ways it's like Budapest with its ruin bars 10 years ago, or Prague in the '90s — gritty, full of life and undiscovered by North Americans — but with an added dash of style that neither of those hotspots had until they were already overrun with tourists.

Now might be the time for this offbeat destination. Air Serbia started flights from New York last summer, the first nonstop service from the United States in 24 years, and construction has



Knez Mihailova Street is the main pedestrian and shopping zone in Belgrade, and is protected by law as one of the oldest and most valuable landmarks of the city. ISTOCK

begun on a 10 million-square-foot development that promises to transform a brownfield right in the city's core.

Winter temperatures average around 2 C, but New Year's Eve is an exciting time to be there,

with wild street parties when hundreds of thousands of tourists, mainly from neighbouring Croatia, Slovenia and Bulgaria, dance at open-air concerts and attend fireworks displays.

Here's a quick guide to a city

on the verge.

First things first: Belgrade will never be in the running for Europe's most beautiful city, partly because the former capital of Yugoslavia has been destroyed and rebuilt so many times in the

CITADEL

For a leafy respite from the gray city, head to Kalemegdan Citadel, a fortress that doubles as the city's biggest park.

■ Ancient Celtic tribesmen laid the first stones of the foundation, and its perch atop a ridge at the confluence of the Danube and Sava rivers was so prized that it was overtaken and built upon by a succession of marauders.

past 2,000 years. Expect to see brutalist Soviet-era buildings and government buildings that were damaged in a 1999 NATO bombing campaign and never repaired. Despite the eyesores and neglect, elegant 19th century architecture also exists, especially around the main pedestrian promenade, Knez Mihailova street.

What the city lacks in European charm, however, it makes up for in affordable luxury. A one-hour massage costs \$25 U.S. with tip. Duck pate with a bright

smear of quince paste on the plate, aperitifs and a bottle of wine goes for \$45 U.S. for two people.

Plenty of familiar hotel brands are bargains here, but why bother when a one-bedroom Airbnb goes for \$27 U.S. a night? Stay in the trendy Skadarlija neighbourhood, a centrally located bohemian hangout with an artsy vibe, galleries, smoky kafane (taverns) and traditional restaurants serving rakija, a fruit brandy of varying flavours that's potent enough to double as paint thinner.

Thanks to a youthful population and reasonable prices, Belgrade has emerged as one of Europe's prime party destinations, and the banks of the Sava are lined with floating clubs called splavovi, which means rafts. They enforce strict dress codes and keep the party going until sunrise with a soundtrack of vaguely folk music set to driving house beats.

The party can begin earlier on land in the surrounding Savamala neighbourhood, where you'll find ample opportunity to hop between bars with names like Mladost and Ludost (translation: young and crazy).

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ON THE MENU

A GRAND RE-OPENING FOR POPULAR FISH RESTAURANT

For 25 years, Sir Winston's Fish and Chips recipe has been tantalizing the taste buds of fish and chips connoisseurs. It has even resulted in the slogan, "It may be battered but it can't be beaten" and earned the restaurant Edmonton's best fish and chips accolades on Google, Yelp and Facebook.

Since a grand re-opening this year, Sir Winston's has also incorporated new menu items, fresh decor and a focus on community engagement.

"Every corner of the restaurant has British history," says Jay Patel, one of Sir Winston's co-owners. "It's a cosy environment and allows you to learn as you enjoy your food, which makes it great family restaurant and shares British happiness."

While juicy and flakey cod, haddock, sole, salmon and halibut in Sir Winston's famous thin and crispy batter are the stars of the menu, the restaurant recently introduced new items that have become wildly popular. Among them are four unique on-tap beers as well as butter chicken, samosa vegetarian, chili chicken, and beef and potato pies.



CONTRIBUTED

"The pies are made with natural ingredients and are all baked here," Patel says. "Butter chicken, especially, has appealed to everyone."

To ensure its connection to the community, meanwhile, Sir Winston's has launched a series of events such as a candlelight dinner with open mic night that supports local talent every Friday and monthly paint parties. It is currently planning many more events for 2017.

Learn a thing or two on teacher gifts

Astrid Van Den Broek

When it comes to giving teachers memorable gifts for the holidays, you know the cranberry-and-cinnamon-scented candle you gave your child's Grade 2 teacher probably didn't make her list of favourite gifts ever.

So what do teachers prefer to receive? Any hints on how to pick the perfect gift for your child's equally perfect teacher? Here are four to give us the scoop on their favourite presents.

Alyssa Greenberg
Grade 7/8 French Immersion teacher
École Stanley Knowles School, Winnipeg



"One of my students once presented me with a concert ticket for an artist we both

PICTURE FRAME, MARSHALLS

really liked," said Greenberg. "The card included a message from her indicating that she had the other ticket and really wanted to enjoy the concert with me. Though it was a bit unconventional — I don't know many students who want to hang out with their teachers outside of school — this was really a memorable experience for me."

Gift giving cheat sheet: "It's always nice for students to notice teacher's interests and choose a gift card that would suit their needs," said Greenberg. For example, Greenberg's students have picked up the fact that she's a baker (she often bakes for her students at Christmas). "So I've often received baking supplies and small kitchen gadgets that have been put to good use."

Heather Webb Makin
Teacher/Librarian
Eastview Public School, Toronto
"As crazy as it sounds, one of



CORKCICLE TUMBLER - COPPER, INDIGO.CA

the best and unexpected gifts was a cocktail blender. I was teaching Kindergarten at the time and there were just some days I could have used it during the school year," said Webb Makin. "I now use it for cocktails in the summer, as well as smoothies throughout the school year. I totally didn't know I needed one until I got it."

Gift giving cheat sheet: "Most teachers, as you know, buy a ton of supplies for their own classrooms, maybe consider gift certificates at Staples or Dollarama," said Webb Makin. "These would be used immediately and the teacher would be forever grateful for that gift. As well, if you know the teacher has a class iPad or Android device to use in the classroom, a gift card to buy an app would not only help the teacher, but most likely your child in the long run."



PORCELAIN TEAPOT, HOMESENSE

Jennifer Sepetdjian
Grade 2 teacher
On a teaching exchange at Glendal Primary School, Glen Waverley, Australia

"When I left my fabulous Grade 1 class in Canada back in December 2015, I got the best gift," said Sepetdjian.

"The class parents and students put together a video of the kids answering questions about me and passing on some wise advice for my year away. It was eight minutes and 30 seconds of complete gratitude. I had to watch it again at home that night as I had missed so much of it that afternoon for all the tears in my eyes. I've never felt so appreciated in my 16 years of teaching."

Gift giving cheat sheet: "I suggest parents get their child to choose what to purchase. Those



BUFFALO PLAID SCARF, WINNERS

kids know that Mrs. A loves coffee, that Ms. J loves to travel or that Mr. D loves to garden and they will be so excited to present the gift to their teacher," said Sepetdjian. "If not, something from a local restaurant, gift card to a shopping centre, tickets to the movies, books for the class, time at the 'pick an item and paint it' kind of shop and there isn't anything wrong with the LCBO (liquor store)!"

Miranda Tonery
Grade 9 teacher
St. Francis of Assisi Middle School, Red Deer, Alta.

"The best gifts have been the ones that came from the heart. There was a parent who was very creative, and she made Christmas balls with the initials of every member of the family each on their own ornament," said Tonery.

"I also had student paint a silhouette picture of my family in a sunset on a canvas."

Gift giving cheat sheet: "The best gifts have been the ones

+ GIFT IDEAS

- 1. Desk Set**
HomeSense, \$24.99
- 2. Buffalo Plaid Scarf**
Winners, \$24.99
- 3. L'Occitane Shea Butter Ultra Rich Body Lotion**
Amazon.ca, \$39
- 4. Metal Lunch Tins**
HomeSense, \$14.99 each
- 5. Tree Line Photo Pillow Cover**
Indigo, Indigo.ca, \$39.50
- 6. Corkcicle Tumbler - Copper**
Indigo, Indigo.ca, \$38
- 7. S'well Marble 17oz Insulated Water bottle**
Indigo, Indigo.ca, \$45
- 8. Picture Frame**
Marshalls, \$12.99
- 9. Superman 1,000 Piece Jigsaw Puzzle**
Marshalls, \$9.99
- 10. Porcelain Teapot**
HomeSense, \$19.99

*Prices may vary
that came from the heart. However, large group gifts of a spa day is always nice as well."



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Be a wine aficionado this season

Peter Rockwell

With more wines in the world than needles on a Christmas tree, choosing the perfect bottle for those on your holiday gift list can be a challenge.

To simplify your shopping here are 10 tasty wines that will appeal to everyone from the burgeoning aficionado whose just getting into wine to the trendiest person you know.

For the wine newbie

Anciano 2007 '7 Year Old' Tempranillo (Spain): Relaxed and ready-to-drink, this Spaniard is one of the oldest reds on store shelves that's still in everyone's price range. Classically labeled and encased in an old-school gold wire wrap, it's all about mature berry fruit which makes it a perfect out of the box selection for turkey dinners.

Inception 2015 Irresistible White (South Africa): With a Garden of Eden-themed label this white looks sexy and tastes pretty much along the same

lines. Big on stone fruit and up-front tropical flavours, it ends surprisingly dry, making it an all-around people pleaser.

Apothic 2014 Inferno (USA): This latest "limited release" in the ever growing Apothic family spends two months in charred, white oak whiskey barrels before being bottled. Though the booze is upfront and personal in the berry-rich aroma and flavour, it mellows itself out when the wine is chilled in the fridge for 10-15 minutes.

For the white wine fan

Kim Crawford 2016 Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc Holiday Edition (New Zealand): For wine fans, Sauvignon Blanc is as synonymous with New Zealand as sheep and the All Blacks. Kim Crawford's version from

Marlborough is arguably the quintessential example, with its gooseberry fruit and zippy acidity wrapped in gold for the holidays.

Marques de Casa Concha 2014 Chardonnay (Chile): No longer the popularity powerhouse it once was, Chardonnay still holds a place in many

hearts, and is proudly served up on holiday tables. This balanced mix of bright fruit and massaging oak has "match with turkey" written all over the label.

For the red wine fan

Meiomi 2014 Pinot Noir (USA): One for those who love a fruit bomb that revels in its

not-so-subtle, thick berry flavours. The grapes come from three different regions in California, combining to create a flowing fruit trail that tastes as good on its own as it will with poultry and ham.

Fontanafredda 2011 Barolo DOCG (Italy): While Piedmont may lack Tuscany's sex appeal, its juice, especially what's squeezed from the vineyards around the village of Barolo, are considered wine royalty. Brooding and rustic with layers of Old World personality, Fontanafredda's Barolo is a great introduction to liquid aristocracy.

For the fizz fan

Santa Margherita Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore DOCG (Italy): Prosecco is so red hot it has made sparkling wine cool. Best known for its sublime Pinot Grigio, Santa Mar-

gherita's spin on this northern Italian sparkler is all about accessible drinkability highlighted by apple and peach aromas and a zesty citrus flavour trail.

Veuve Clicquot Brut Champagne (France): Orange in label and classic in champagne goodness, this Pinot Noir-based bubbly loves to get decked out for the season. This year, it's housed in an arrow tin indicating the distance to Champagne from 29 locations. Look for Montréal; it's the only Canadian city with a shout-out.

For the hipster

Gonzalez Byass Tio Pepe Extra Dry Fino Sherry (Spain): Everything old is new again and sherry, long the tippie of "mature" drinkers, is having a bit of a moment with both mixologists and millennial-aged wine aficionados. Bone dry and best served cold, this fino is surprising food-friendly and will stay fresh for over a week if refrigerated.

Prices reflect the range across the country. Some products may not be available in all locations.



Tasteful gifts for foodies in your life

GOOD EATING

That perfect something for the home chefs on that gift list

Vicky Sanderson

Sure it's better to give to than to receive. It's also true that splurging on a gift for your favourite home cook could be an investment in good eating. Here are a few items that might serve the amateur chef and gift-giver equally well.

Blenders don't always get the respect they deserve as small-footprint appliances that do everything from blend soups to make mayonnaise to chop nuts and herbs.

Chefs, who are also connoisseurs of mid-century or small-space design, might like one from Smeg, the Italian manufacturer of compact,

curved countertop appliances in a rainbow of colours. A Smeg blender, in a cheery seasonal red, is available at Lowe's, lowes.ca, for \$349.

Brand new this year is Panasonic's Countertop Induction Oven, which uses induction and infrared heating to create what has been described as a toaster oven on steroids. There's almost no preheat time; in minutes, it's up to 450°F. That's hot enough to grill whole fish quickly with a crisp skin and flaky, moist interior. A one-pan chicken and veg meal can be done in about 20 minutes.

The non-stick pan that must be used with it is dishwasher safe, and each unit comes with a cookbook of recipes developed by the Culinary Institute of America. Available at major retailers and on Panasonic's eStore, the manufacturer's suggested price is \$700.

Home chefs who already love Le Creuset's line of enameled cast-iron wear might

covet the Dutch Oven in a zippy Tartan pattern exclusive to Williams Sonoma, williams-sonoma.com, for \$550. Purists who insist on solids will be better pleased with exclusive grey, white or dark blue options. (Psst: A more affordable idea is a simple cast iron pan, a favourite of many chefs. Walmart sells a Lodge 6.5-inch pan for \$1.)

Fresh herbs take any dish from average to outstanding. They are much easier to incorporate if the kitchen includes a unit from AeroGarden, which makes economically-sized indoor garden kits with full-spectrum grow lights and hydroponic, soil-free containers. Recent sale prices

at aerogarden.com began at about \$100.

The slow cooker has long been loved by home cooks. It's perfect for anything that benefits from lengthy cooking at low temperature, such as stews, stocks and cheaper cuts of meat. It also does soups, yogurt, pudding, grain dishes, and jams.

There are lots of versions of this versatile cookware, but the granddaddy of them all, CrockPot, has a clever new design twist. The Multi Crock-Pot comes with a 2.5-split, a four-, and a six-quart crock. When not in use, they nest for compact storage. About \$100 from Bed Bath & Beyond, bedbathandbeyond.ca.



Le Creuset's Dutch Oven in Tartan. LE CREUSET



Güde Chef's Knife. LEE VALLEY TOOLS

A vacuum packer is a very efficient way to preserve food. So a chef can buy larger amounts of perishable foods, such as cheese, when it's on sale and/or available and use it reliably for a couple of months to come. It also seals make-ahead meals for road or camping trips, and busy weeknights.

Hamilton Beach has come out with NutriFresh, a vacuum sealer with settings for moist, dry and delicate foods, which are sealed in bags made of refillable, BPA-free plastic rolls. About \$130 at multiple retailers and online at hamiltonbeach.ca.

Adventurous chefs will want to try the sealer to cook sous-vide, in which vacuum-sealed food cooks under gently circulating water at very

low, very precise temperatures for a very long time — 24 hours or more. The advantages are virtually no volume loss, and excellent texture; the long, slow cooking apparently also makes magic out of tougher cuts of meat.

To do it, the cook will also need something like the Nomiku immersion circulator. About the size of a hand blender, it clips on to any pot, and handles the temp and circulation. It sells for \$549 from Nella, nellaonline.com. Look for other, perhaps less expensive brands, at Amazon.ca.

Good knives are the foundation to a functioning kitchen. Knife nerds would be delighted to receive the Güde Chef's Knife from Lee Valley Tools, leevalley.com.



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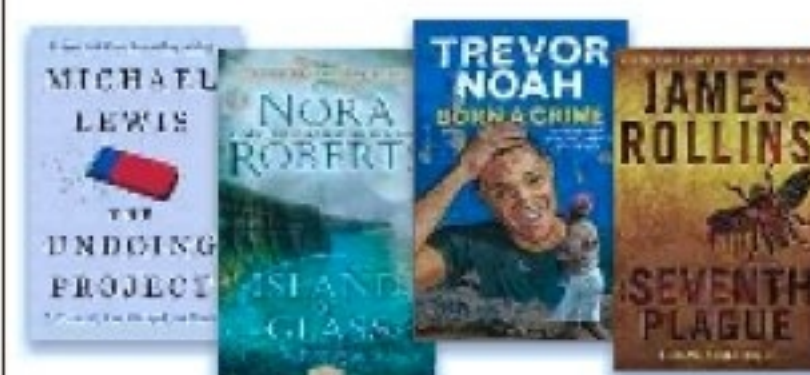


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Messier blown away by Jagr's longevity

NHL

Czech player poised to become 2nd in all-time points

Whether as a flashy rising star or as a battle-tested veteran, Jaromir Jagr has impressed NHL legend Mark Messier for more than a quarter century.

"When (Jagr) came into Pittsburgh he dazzled us with his power and his skill and his overall game," said Messier. "Later on in his career he's kind of inspired us with his passion and dedication."

"He's played long enough to understand what the game means to him as a person and as a player."

Poised to be overtaken by the 44-year-old Jagr for second on the NHL's all-time points list, Messier reflected Thursday about the Czech superstar's accomplishment in what has become increasingly a young man's game.

"The only way you can play, and do what he's doing right now, is to make sure you are putting in the time for your conditioning and taking care of yourself," said Messier. "The game has to be the No. 1 priority in your life."



44

Jagr's age. He turns 45 on Feb. 15.

Panthers right-winger Jaromir Jagr had 1,883 NHL points over his career heading into action on Thursday night. STEVE RUSSELL/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

because it takes a lot of time to prepare each and every game, let alone each and every season.

"You've got to give Jaromir a lot of credit for what he's been able to do early in his career, and then maybe even more credit for how he's been able to sustain himself."

Messier, who passed Gordie Howe's point total of 1,850 for second all-time

in his final NHL season back in 2003-04, finished his career with 1,887 points. Jagr grabbed third place from Howe in March and sat at 1,883 points heading into Thursday's game between his Florida Panthers and the Winnipeg Jets.

Wayne Gretzky's all-time mark of 2,857 points isn't going to be equalled by Jagr, or likely anyone else for that matter.

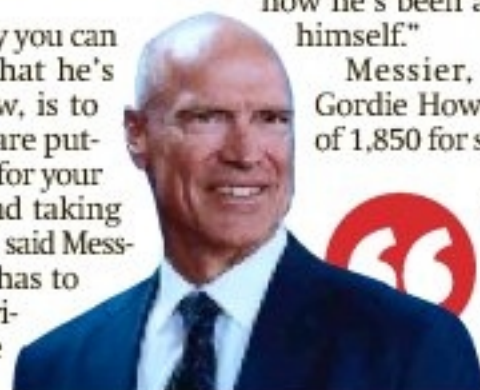
Jagr joined the Pittsburgh Penguins in 1990 and won two Stanley Cups alongside Lemieux. He has gone on to play for seven more NHL franchises, but also spent three seasons in the KHL where he amassed 146 points.

Messier scored his 1,887 points in 1,756 NHL games, while Jagr has suited up 1,659 times in North America.

"This is kind of anticlimactic for me in a way," said Messier. "I understand the amount of time he put in overseas."

"In my own mind he surpassed me a long time ago."

THE CANADIAN PRESS



In my own mind he surpassed me a long time ago.

Mark Messier on Jaromir Jagr approaching his NHL points total

NBA

Beloved broadcaster Sager dies at 65

Craig Sager never once thought about giving up as he battled cancer for more than two years.

"Man, life is too beautiful, too wonderful, there's just too many things," he said in late August. "It's not just you. It's your family and kids and all. Fight. Fight until the end. Fight as hard as you can."

The end for the beloved TNT broadcaster came Thursday when the man known as much for his outrageous wardrobe as his relationships with the NBA's elite succumbed to the disease he fought so hard

to overcome. He was 65.

"Craig Sager was a beloved member of the Turner family for more than three decades and he has been a true inspiration to all of us," Turner president David Levy said in a statement. "There will never be another Craig Sager. His incredible talent, tireless work ethic and commitment to his craft took him all over the world covering sports."

His son, Craig Jr., posted a loving video tribute to his father, tweeting: "We packed a lifetime and then some into these 28 years together."



Craig Sager
GETTY IMAGES

Sager's passing brought out condolences from every corner of the NBA and Hall of Famer Larry Bird expressed what many were feeling.

"He was as identifiable with the NBA as any player or coach," Bird said in a statement. "The league will not be the same without him."

Magic Johnson echoed those sentiments on Twitter.

"The NBA family lost a legend

who changed the way sideline reporters did their job. RIP Craig Sager," Johnson said.

Sager had a third bone marrow transplant at the end of August in Houston to fight an aggressive form of leukemia.

He announced in April 2014 that he had been diagnosed with acute myeloid leukemia, and he missed the playoffs and much of the following season as he underwent two bone marrow transplants. He revealed in March 2016 that his leukemia was no longer in remission.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

HOCKEY

Canadian juniors low on star power

Without an obvious star player to carry the pressure and expectations, Canada's team for the world junior hockey championship will be all about teamwork, speed and desire.

The final 22-man roster that emerged from this week's four-day selection camp in Boisbriand, Que., is deep in very good players, such as 2015 third overall NHL draft pick Dylan Strome and Ontario Hockey League scoring leader Taylor Raddysh, but doesn't have a Connor McDavid or a John Tavares to claim the spotlight.

"We want to be a complete team," said coach Dominique Ducharme, the Drummondville Voltigeurs coach and general manager who led the Halifax Mooseheads to the 2013 Memor-



Dylan Strome
GETTY IMAGES

ial Cup. "We've got speed, skill. We're reliable. We can defend. We're good at putting pressure on the other team. We want to put all that together."

The heat will be on Canada after a quarter-final elimination from last year's world junior event by host Finland.

And this year the stakes may be higher in Montreal and Toronto, where Canada won gold in two years ago. THE CANADIAN PRESS

SPONSORSHIP

Tiger signs deal to use new golf ball

One tournament into his return was all Tiger Woods needed to strike a deal with Bridgestone to play its golf ball.

Bridgestone Golf said Thursday it has signed Woods to a multi-year agreement in which he will play and promote the golf ball. Woods effectively became a free agent for equipment deals when Nike decided to stop making clubs and golf balls and instead focus on apparel.

Bridgestone becomes the first new equipment company that

Woods has endorsed since he turned pro 20 years ago. He signed with Titleist (equipment) and Nike (footwear and clothing) in 1996, and his switch to all Nike equipment began with its golf ball in May 2000.

Terms of the contract were not disclosed.

Woods recently returned to the Hero World Challenge in the Bahamas after having not played for 15 months while recovering from back surgeries.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IN BRIEF

Major League Soccer plans to expand to 28 teams

Major League Soccer commissioner Don Garber announced plans Thursday for the league's expansion to 28 teams, including a deadline for owners to apply and a new franchise fee.

The fee for the two teams expected to be granted next year is jumping to \$150 million. Garber also set a Jan. 31, 2017, deadline for interested potential owners or ownership groups to apply.

The league recently expanded to 22 teams.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Top Euro clubs unite against expanded World Cup

FIFA has found a difficult opponent to president Gianni Infantino's plan to expand the World Cup to 48 teams.

A group of 220 of Europe's top clubs called on Infantino on Thursday not to increase the tournament from its 32-team format.

The European Club Association said the number of games played each season "has already reached an unacceptable level."

Infantino wants 48 teams at the 2026 World Cup.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Finding value at running back

NFL

Unheralded players making impact with ground attack

Hark the unheralded running backs. Fifth-round picks, an undrafted rookie and a player who was out of the NFL for three seasons are among those bursting into the clear this year, leaving defences and fans wondering the same thing: Where did they come from?

The surprising success by such low-profile rushers as Jay Ajayi, Jordan Howard, Robert Kelley and Tim Hightower speaks to the challenge of evaluating running backs. "It's not like it used to be," said Miami Dolphins offensive coordinator Clyde Christensen, an NFL assistant since 1996. "When I first came in the league, you'd watch a tailback in college, and they all had a fullback in front of them, and they all got their 25 carries a game, and you com-

pared them to each other. Now they're coming out of spread offences, and there are a lot of good running backs out there who play for teams that don't run the ball as much. It's a lot harder comparing them now."

Some of the most frantic scrambling this season has been by teams seeking someone to carry the ball, with the high injury rate at the position creating openings for under-the-radar runners.

Ezekiel Elliott, DeMarco Murray and Le'Veon Bell are having big seasons, as expected. But other Pro Bowl backs — Todd Gurley, Doug Martin, Adrian Peterson, Chris Ivory — have struggled or been hurt this year.

Four-time Pro Bowl rusher Arian Foster retired from Miami in October, the day after Ajayi's second consecutive 200-yard game for the Dolphins. Even coach Adam Gase was surprised by the way the job was seized by

Ajayi, a fifth-round pick in 2015.

"When we were going into the season, we felt like we were going to get four guys involved in what we were doing," Gase said. "So we didn't know if we'd really have enough touches to say a guy was going to have a 1,000-yard season."

Ajayi is 44 yards from the 1,000 mark, and one of 11 players on pace to reach the milestone. Six did it last year.

Cowboys rookie Elliott leads the league with 1,392 yards.

"We've all seen how the league has gone as far as trends with the running backs," Gase said. "It seems like rushing is coming back a little bit. You're seeing teams like Dallas, and obviously we're feeling pretty good about what we've got going on. There are other teams that are leaning on the running back a little more now."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

“

It seems like rushing is coming back a little bit.

Dolphins coach Adam Gase



Dolphins running back Jay Ajayi carries the ball against Bills cornerback Ronald Darby on Oct. 23 in Miami Gardens, Fla. Ajayi rushed for 214 yards in a 28-25 win. MIKE EHRLMANN/GETTY IMAGES

IN BRIEF

Peterson return boosts Viking playoff push hopes

Adrian Peterson's return to practice has brought much optimism to the Vikings late in the regular season as they prepare for a playoffs push.

Peterson has been wearing a brace supporting the right knee, which underwent meniscus surgery earlier this season. Peterson and the Vikings (7-6) are tempering any thought of a swift return for this Sunday against Indianapolis.

Speaking on Thursday for the first time since returning to practice, Peterson didn't hold firm to any return date, but acknowledged his hope of being back on Dec. 24 against the rival Green Bay Packers. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



NFL SEAHAWKS ROUT RAMS Seattle Seahawks outside linebacker K.J. Wright, centre, and middle linebacker Bobby Wagner, right, team up to bring down wide receiver Kenny Britt of the Los Angeles Rams at CenturyLink Field on Thursday. Seattle won 24-3. OTTO GREULE JR./GETTY IMAGES

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MAKE IT TONIGHT

Satisfying Avocado, Lettuce and Tomato sandwich



PHOTO: MAYA VISHNEV

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada



Forget the bacon because you don't need it! Ok, don't give us that side-eye because the ALT is as satisfying as your diner classic thanks to sweet basil. Trust us.

Ready in 10 minutes

Prep time: 5 minutes
Serves 2

Ingredients

4 basil leaves, torn
1/2 avocado, pitted and mashed
1 teaspoon lemon juice
1 tomato
1 teaspoon olive oil
1/2 a head of Boston bibb lettuce
4 pieces of multi grain bread, toasted
sea salt

Directions

1. Cut tomato and lay out on a plate. Coat with olive oil and sprinkle with sea salt. Let stand.

2. Meanwhile, mash avocado in a medium bowl and then add lemon juice and torn basil. Mix until smooth.

3. Toast bread and then smear about a tablespoon and a half of the avocado spread onto the bread. Finish by adding tomato slices and a few pieces of lettuce.

4. Cut in half or in quarters and serve with some cucumber slices.

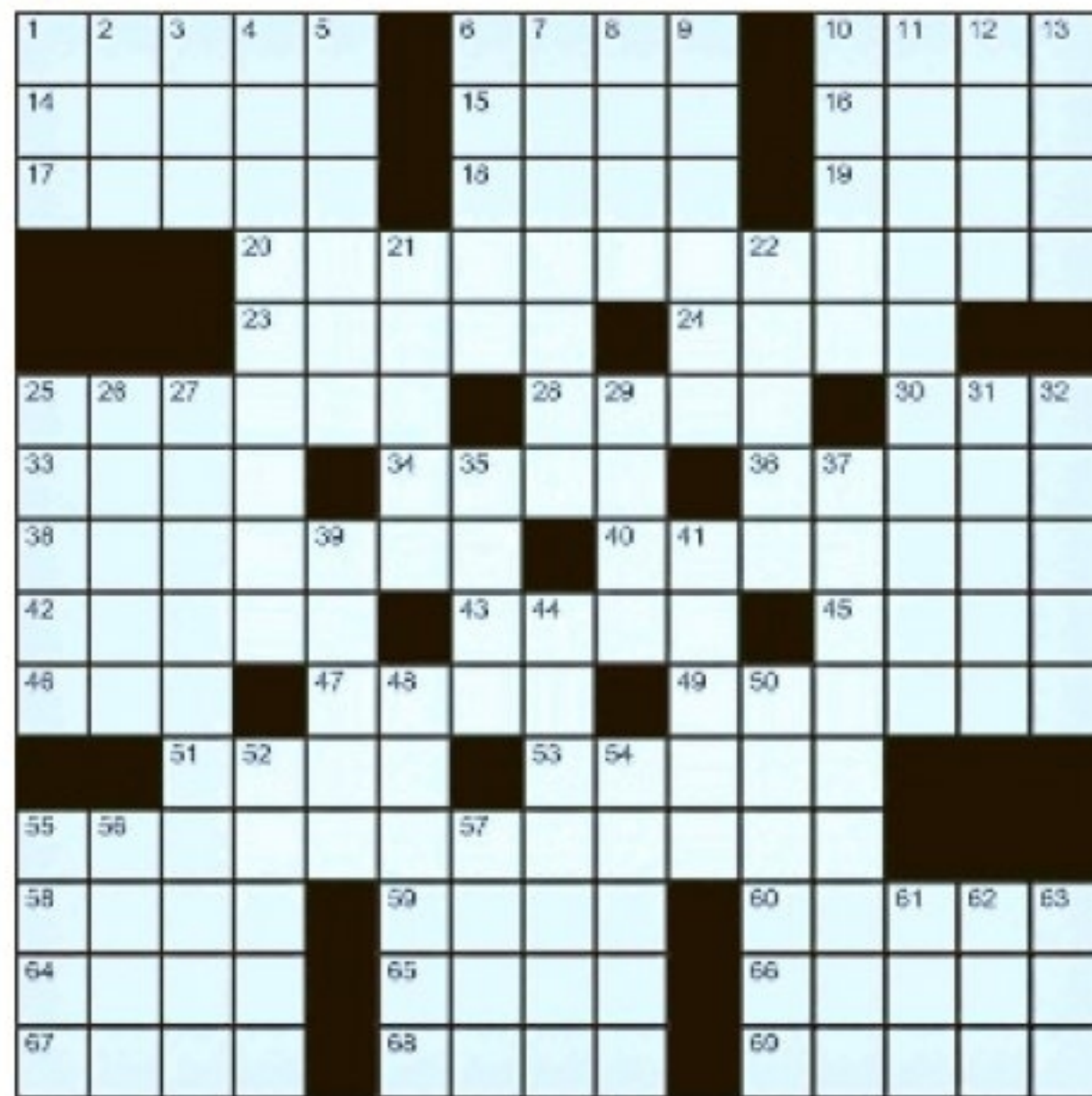
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CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN

ACROSS

1. Australian actor Mr. Bana's
6. "Sure ___ standing here..."
10. Ladies
14. "Well, obviously, Sherlock!": 2 wds.
15. Ms. Rowlands of "The Notebook" (2004)
16. Prefix to 'matic'
17. Mouthwash brand
18. Car rental company
19. River of Russia
20. Make the best of a fierce Winter day all bundled up in a toque, scarf and mittens: 3 wds.
23. "Do you have a pencil ___ I can burrow?"
24. All square
25. King Arthur's nephew Knight
28. Julie Harris' role in "East of Eden" (1955)
30. Initials-sharers of Emilio Estevez's actor brother
33. Roman love god
34. "Sesame Street" character
36. Stage stuff
38. Ontario town; or, Ms. Lohan
40. Maneuvered the motor vehicle
42. "Then...?": 2 wds.
43. Wealthy
45. Canvas for a survey
46. Check/determine



47. Starring role
49. Housing market
51. Staircase support
53. ___ glue
55. #27-Down's answer is a what?: 2 wds.
58. Slightly open
59. Ballerina's garb
60. Apollo, for one

64. Blight
65. Util. bill
66. Bestow with a trait
67. Comedian Mr. Caesar's

DOWN

1. N n n N and N and n
2. Bird of myth
3. Nuptials vow: 2 wds.
4. Dishes/glasses storage areas
5. TV personality Ms. Shepherd

6. Tequila plant source
7. Time to catch the early train during the work week, e.g.: 2 wds.
8. "Put a sock ___!"
9. Utensil for preparing potatoes
10. Soya ___
11. Canadian song on

#27-Down: 2 wds.
12. And others, for short: 2 wds.
13. Purchased, in another word
21. Sleeping problem
22. Sidestep
25. Posh parties
26. "Oh My Darling, Clementine" part: "... excavating for ___"
27. Sarah McLachlan's new release featuring classic Christmas tunes
29. Pear variety
31. Extract metal from ore
32. Woefully
35. Vega constellation
37. Quittance
39. Strong
41. Ache a lot
44. Conceptualizes
48. Joyful
50. Projects positivity, perhaps
52. Buenos ___ (Capital of Argentina)
54. ___ the guitar strings
55. Montreal hockey players, to fans
56. Bionic Woman's hometown in California
57. Candy canes time
61. Mount ___ (Peak of Crete)
62. ___-of-war
63. Greenlight reply

* IT'S ALL IN THE STARS Your daily horoscope by Francis Drake

Aries March 21 - April 20
Grab every chance to travel, because you need a change of scenery. Likewise, you will love to learn something new if you take a course or study something unusual.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
You can make headway clearing up loose details about shared property, inheritances, taxes and debt. Just roll up your sleeves and dig in. Now is the time!

Gemini May 22 - June 21
You can learn a lot about your style of relating to friends, spouses and partners at this time. Observe your style of dealing with those who are closest to you.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
You have a lot of stuff, and anything you do to help you feel better organized is a good thing. What can you do today to make your life run more smoothly?

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
You want to play and take time off from drudgery, even if it's just catching a game or going out for dinner or seeing a movie. You need some fun!

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Because you will likely earn more money soon, this is a good time to think about how you can make home repairs. You also might be focused on a parent more than usual.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
This is a busy time for you, because short trips, reading, writing and talking to everyone will keep you on the go. Enjoy this accelerated pace.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
It's important to know what your money scene is. How much do you own? How much do you make? How much do you owe? Information is power.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Make the most of this time with three planets in your sign. It's easy to attract positive situations now, which means you can come out on top.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
You might want to hide for a few days, because you're not ready to step out into the world. When your birthday arrives, things will be different.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Enjoy your popularity with others now. Probably more than any other sign in the zodiac, friendships mean a lot to you.

Pisces Feb. 20 - March 20
Because you look so good to bosses and VIPs, use this time to go after what you want. Promote your own agenda. Speak up.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9



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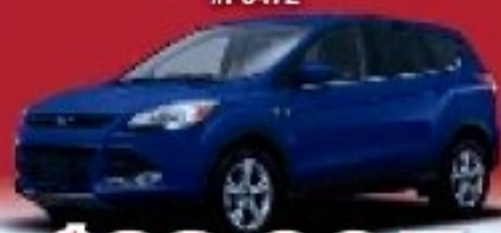
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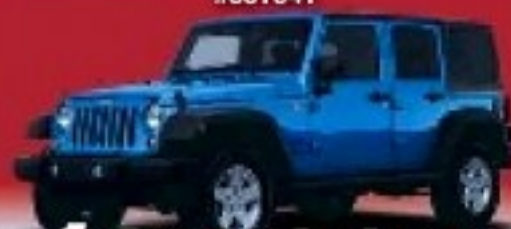
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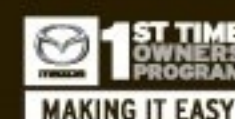
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